THE JEWISH SPY:

BEING A

PHILOSOPHICAL, HISTORICAL and CRITICAL *Correſpondence*,

By LETTERS

Which lately paſs'd between certain *JEWS* in *Turkey*, *Italy*, *France*, *Spain*, *&c.*

Tranſlated from the ORIGINALS into *French*,

By the MARQUIS D'ARGENS;

And now done into Engliſh.

VOL. IV.



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M. DCC. XL.



BRITISH MUSEUM
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TO THE

Valiant and Magnanimous

Don *QUIXOTE*

De la MANCHA,

Invincible Knight of the LIONS,

&c. &c. &c.

ILluſtrious Hero of *Cervantes*, not to be paralleli'd for the Deſtruction of Sheep and Puppets, couragious and intrepid Aſſailant of Wind-Mills and Fulling-Mills, perpetual Terror of the Catchpoles of the Holy Brotherhood *, *&c. &c.* permit me to put under your powerful Protection this Fourth

* *La Santa Hermandad*, as it is called in the Original, is a Brotherhood of long ſtanding in *Spain*; where it was firſt inſtituted in a Time of very great Confuſion, to ſuppreſs Robbers: by which means 'tis ſafe travelling in this Country, the Fraternity being ſpread all over the Kingdom. Their Beadles or Serjeants to apprehend ſuch Offenders are called *Alguazils*.

Volume of the *Lettres Juives*. A certain crack-brain'd Knight, to the full as mad and as extravagant as yourſelf, hath reſolv'd upon their Ruin, and vow'd their Deſtruction. In vain does the Public think to ſave them from his Fury. He offers battle to the whole Univerſe, and boaſts that he will reduce them to atoms, maugre the Protection of all Enchanters. In this extreme Diſtreſs permit me to fly to you for Succour; come, O wrong-headed Knight, oppoſe Folly to Folly: humble your Rival, the inſolent Knight of *Iberia*; and after laying him flat on the Ground, compel him to confeſs that he has no Title to the Privilege of being ſo extravagant as you. Conſidering how long he has pretended to vye with you for the Scepter or Bawble of *Momus*, your Jealouſy might juſtly be inflam'd at his Impertinence and Folly; yet you ſtill ſuffer him to enjoy his Reputation in Peace. But conſider that Glory calls you forth to Battle, and that even your Profeſſion demands you ſhould exert your ſelf. You are bound by the Laws of Knight-Errantry to redreſs Grievances, to comfort the Afflicted, and to protect the Oppreſſed. You cannot therefore in Juſtice

tice refuſe the *Lettres Juives* that generous Aſſiſtance which I earneſtly implore for them; and in the juſt Confidence I have of obtaining from you this Favour, I remain with the profoundeſt Reſpect,

INCOMPARABLE KNIGHT,

Your moſt Humble, and moſt

Obedient Servant,

M. D.

PREFACE.

JUST as I had finiſhed this fourth Volume, I received from *Amſterdam* the twenty-third Tome of the *Bibliotheque Francoiſe*; in which I found a Letter, wherein, under colour of ſetting forth the State of the Sciences in *Spain*, there is a warm Declamation againſt a certain Work, not mention'd indeed, but ſo plainly deſcrib'd, that one may eaſily ſee it means the *Jewiſh Letters*.

I reſolved at firſt to make no anſwer to this Critique, the Author of which paſſes in the Eye of the World, as well as in the Republick of Letters, for a kind of Madman, and a perfect Copy of the famous Don *Quixote*. In reality, 'tis well known, he is as romantically fond of the *Spaniſh* Nation as the Hero of *La Mancha* was of his incomparable *Dulcinea*. I did not therefore look upon myſelf as obliged to take notice of the Objections of ſuch a Perſon; and I ſhould have held my firſt Reſolution if I had not afterwards reflected, that this impertinent Letter being inſerted in a Journal, wherein we ſometimes meet with uſeful and curious Pieces, many Readers might be perſuaded the Criticiſm came from the Journaliſts themſelves. I will therefore juſt point

out

out a few of the many Blunders in that ridiculous Piece.

This Knight of *Iberia* undertakes at once the Defence of all the Authors who have been criticized in the *Jewiſh Letters*. He ought to be pardon'd for reſenting the Affront put upon them, becauſe a good part of it falls to his own Share; and he appeals to the Publick againſt the Injuſtice which he imagines to have been done to him. *He treats as Blockheads*, ſays he, *Men of Learning, who have put it in the power of the Publick to judge of their Erudition.* To this I anſwer, that there can be nothing ſo falſe; and I defy him to name an Author, worthy of Eſteem, whom I have not commended. *Des Cartes, Gaſſendi, Bernier, Mallebranche, Bayle, Locke, s'Graveſande, Vitriarius, Boerhaave, De Thou, Daniel, Paſcal, Sirmond, Petau, Lamy:* in ſhort, all the Learned, of whatever Country, whatſoever Condition, or whatever Religion they are of, Catholics or Proteſtants, Jeſuits or Janſeniſts, they were all one to me. Wherever I diſcover'd Merit, I have not ſcrupled to own it. I have been equally juſt to the Authors of Works relating to Poetry and Romances: I have commended *Corneille, Racine, Milton, Pope, Petrarch, Taſſo, Guarini, Don Lopez de Vega, Cervantes, Crebillon, Voltaire, Rouſſeau.* It is true, that even at the time I allow'd the laſt to have Wit, I denied him ſomewhat elſe,

which I thought I both might and ought to do, ſince it was taken from him by a ſolemn Arret of the firſt Parliament of *France*. Thoſe I have mention'd are all good Authors; and for their Works I ſhall ever have the higheſt Eſteem. Where then are the Writers I have treated as *Blockheads! who had neverthelefs given the Publick an opportunity of judging of their Erudition?* I fancy the *Critick* had a mind to point out himſelf. But how entred it into his Brain that his copying three Pages from *Moreri*'s Dictionary, and three more from the Dictionary of *Corneille*, and connecting them with Scraps from other Books, and with his Pillage from *Baudrand*, whoſe Dictionary he has almoſt robb'd of every Word; how could he think, I ſay, that this would give him the Title and Character of a Man of Learning? I proceed to other Complaints:

It is aſtoniſhing, ſays this Critick, *that a Perſon of Birth, Education, Wit, Fortune, and honourable Employments, ſhould quit all, and take up the mean Employment of an Author.* Theſe Praiſes beſtow'd upon me are only Garlands to adorn the Victim; and I am raiſed to this height purely to be tumbled down from it. Before I leave this Article I muſt and will ſay it, that tho' it were true, that Fortune had placed me in a ſplendid Condition, there is nothing ſhameful in my quitting it, in order to abandon myſelf entirely to Philoſophy, and

to

to enjoy that ſweet Satisfaction which reſults from the Cultivation of the Sciences. Were the Works of *Rochefoucaut*, *Montaigne*, *Malherbe*, *Racan*, or *Buſſi Rabutin* ever objected to them as a Crime? The famous Cardinal *Richelieu* was as zealous for having the Reputation of an Author as he was for the Deſtruction of *Spain*. This Critick, no doubt, deſpiſes the Cardinal, and thinks him much to blame. But to proceed to his Reproaches.

He ranges me in the Claſs of thoſe Libertine Writers who ſet Pen to Paper for no other end but to run down Religion, Virtue, Knowledge, and Merit. As to Virtue and Religion, I have in the Prefaces to the firſt and ſecond Volumes of this Work made it clearly enough appear, that none but a perfect Slanderer could be guilty of ſuch Language: And as to the ſmall Reſpect he ſays I have ſhewn towards the truly Learned, I have juſt explain'd my ſelf on that head. If, indeed, the Critick is really a learned Man, then I own I have done wrong to condemn his Works; but this is a Point which I leave to the Deciſion of the Publick.

As this Cenſurer hath not thought proper to enter into any Detail, but only runs out into general Invectives againſt me, while he commends exceſſively a number of miſerable Authors, it's impoſſible I ſhould anſwer him as to the Faults he may find in this Book. Before

I conclude this Preface, therefore, I will examine ſome of the Praiſe of which he has been ſo laviſh on the *Spaniſh* Writers; and I ſhall evidently demonſtrate, that they are a hundred times more hurt by his Compliments than they could have been by the moſt abuſive Criticiſm. One may well apply to him, in this Caſe, the fine Paſſage in *Tacitus: Peſſimum Inimicorum Genus Laudantes.*

Our Critick begins by eſtabliſhing the Goodneſs, Beauty, and Delicacy of the *Spaniſh* Genius on the Works of St. *Tereſa*, *Lewis* of *Granada*, and the Reverend Father *Rodriguez*; and he even proceeds to inſult me by queſtioning whether I know thoſe Books: I dare ſay, they are as well known to me as to him, tho' I value them much leſs; eſpecially *Rodriguez*, of whoſe writing I have read ſome very bad Books, very meanly tranſlated, and ſo generally contemn'd, that *Moliere* was not afraid to ridicule them in one of his Pieces. I am aſtoniſh'd the Critick did not know this Line:

She read Rodriguez, *and us'd mental Prayer.*

Perhaps 'twas a wilful Forgetfulneſs; for as to Theatrical Matters, they are to be ſure within the Sphere of his Knowledge.

I come next to the Dramatick Poets, whom this Critick has commended in a manner ſo ridiculous, that if he had intended it, he could not

not have ſatiriz'd them more ſeverely. Theſe are his own Words: *The* Spaniſh *Dramatick Authors have been long the Magazines whence our Authors have ſupplied themſelves.* Scarron *and* Montfleuri *are Inſtances.* Can any thing be ſaid ſo much to the Diſgrace of the *Spaniſh* Poets, as to make them the Inventors of the vileſt Farces, and to give them for Diſciples and Imitators the worſt and moſt deſpicable of our Writers? What Notion ſhould we have of certain Poets if we were told that *Pradon* form'd his Taſte by peruſing their Books? ſhould we not have reaſon to regard them as the very Sink of the Republick of Letters? It muſt be confeſs'd the Critick has but bad Talents for commending. Defend me, Heaven, from ſuch a Panegyriſt! I even prefer his Hatred to his Friendſhip. In order to ſhew him the Difference between the Praiſes I have beſtow'd on ſome valuable *Spaniſh* Writers and the ſad ſtuff he writes about them, I ſhall here report what I have ſaid of Don *Lopez de Vega* in my 118th Letter: *That Author hath written Comedies ſo excellent, that the great* Corneille *aſſures us, that he would have given two of his beſt Tragedies to have been the Inventor of the* Lyar. *Thou knoweſt it was upon the Plan of this* Spaniſh *Play the* French *Poet compoſed his.* I leave it now to be decided, whether the Critic or I aim'd to affront the *Spaniſh* Nation. But I ſhall be

ſtill

ſtill in a better way to obtain a favourable Verdict, when the Reader ſees the Parallel of what we have both ſaid of the *Spaniſh* Hiſtorians.

The Critic contents himſelf with mentioning *The Hiſtory of* Arragon *by* Zurita, and *The General Hiſtory of* Spain *by* Mariana. By an unaccountable ſtroke of Folly, of two Authors mention'd by him, there is one who ought to be abhorr'd by all good Men: not but that the Hiſtory of *Mariana* is a good Book; but he compoſed another *, which the Parliament of *Paris* condemn'd to the Flames, and which the Jeſuits themſelves have diſavow'd. In this Work he has inſinuated, that it is not only lawful, but laudable to put to death an heretical or a tyrannical King: He praiſes, even to exceſs, the execrable Monk who murder'd *Henry* the Third, and is not aſham'd to call him the Honour and Glory of *France*. It muſt be acknowledg'd, that ſince the Critic reſolv'd to quote but two Authors, he ought to have avoided making *Mariana* one of them, or elſe he ſhould have follow'd my Example, and mention'd ſeveral others at the ſame time. I ſhall tranſcribe from my 118th Letter the Names of ſome, in the order they are therein commended: *Antonio de Solis*, *Sandoval*, *Antonio de Herrera*, Don *Bartholomew de las Caſas*. Nor have

* *De Rege & Regis Inſtitutione.*

I forgot to praiſe ſuch Poets and Romance Writers as are worthy the Eſteem of Readers of Judgment: As *Michael de Cervantes*, *Matthew Alcman*, Don *Alonzo de Hercilla*, *John Ruſo*, *Chriſtopher de Virves*, &c. It may eaſily be determin'd from the number of thoſe Authors, whether it was my Deſign to ſink the Reputation of one Nation, in order to raiſe that of another. It is true, I did maintain, and do ſtill, that the *Spaniards* have not one Philoſopher amongſt them; and that none they can have by reaſon of the Inquiſition. And is not this a Truth of which the whole World is convinced? The Critic indeed will not allow it. Like a magnanimous and unconquerable Knight he is determin'd to ſtand to his Opinion right or wrong: An exact and worthy Copy of the Hero of *Cervantes*, with whom there is no living on good Terms, if one does not purely and ſimply confeſs, that the very faults of his charming *Dulcinea* are ſuperior to the Virtues of the greateſt Princeſſes.

In order to give the greater weight to his Opinion, the Critic calls in the Authority of Father *Rapin*, who, in his *Reflections on Philoſophy*, ſays the *Spaniards* excel in Metaphyſicks. But that Author's Blunder is no excuſe at all for the Critic's: For example, the Commendation given by this Jeſuit to the Phyſics and Logic of *Ariſtotle* is ſufficient to ſhew whether

whether his Opinion ought to be look'd on as deciſive in matters of Philoſophy *. *There appear'd nothing*, ſays he, *that was fix'd and regular, either in Logic or true Philoſophy, before* Ariſtotle. *This Genius, ſo very rational and intelligent, enter'd ſo deep into the Abyſs of human Underſtanding, that he penetrated to its moſt ſecret Receſſes, by the accurate Diſtinctions he made as to its Operations. Before him they had never ſounded this vaſt Ocean of the human Thoughts in order to judge of its Depth.* Ariſtotle *was the firſt who diſcover'd this new way, in order to attain to Science by the Evidence of Demonſtration, and to proceed to Demonſtration geometrically by the Mode of Syllogiſm, the moſt accompliſh'd Work, the greateſt Effort of the human Mind.* To ſhew the Impertinence and Ridicule of this Elogium, and alſo what ſort of Books thoſe are which paſſed with Father *Rapin* for Maſter-Pieces in Philoſophy, I ſhall only cite a Paſſage from *Des Cartes*, another from *Mallebranche*, and a third from *Locke*. Whoever would be more fully convinced of the Nonſenſe of the Writings of this *Grecian* Sage need only conſult the illuſtrious *Gaſſendi* in his *Exercitationes Paradoxicæ adverſus Ariſtotelicos.*

* Rapin, *Reflexions ſur la Logique*, Num. iv. p. 373, 374.

I begin with tranſcribing the Opinion of *Mallebranche* * : Ariſtotle *ſeldom reaſon'd on any other than the confuſed Ideas we receive by the Senſes, and other vague, general, and indeterminate Notions, which convey'd nothing particular to the Underſtanding. The Terms made uſe of commonly by this Philoſopher ſerved only to expreſs confuſedly to the Senſes and the Imagination, the indiſcriminate Notions he had of ſenſible Things, or elſe were contrived to make up ſo looſe and indeterminate a Diſcourſe as expreſſed nothing diſtinctly.*

Let me next introduce *Des Cartes* † : *The Logic of the Schools is properly ſpeaking nothing more than a Dialectic; which teaches us a Method of imparting to others what we know, or even of putting a Parcel of Words together without Judgment upon Things we know not, conſequently it corrupts Good Senſe rather than augments it.*

I cloſe my Confutation of Father *Rapin* with a Paſſage from Mr. *Locke* ‖ : *We reaſon*, ſays he, *much better, and with more Perſpicuity when we obſerve only the Connection of Proofs, without methodizing our Thoughts, or forming them into Syllogiſms. . . . God hath not been ſo ſparing of his Favours to Mankind,*

* Mallebranche, *Recherche de la Verité*, Liv. v. cap. ii. p. 388.

† Des Cartes, *Principes de la Philoſophie*, Preface.

‖ Eſſay on Human Underſtanding, Book iv. ch. xvii.

Mankind, as only to make us two-legged Creatures, and leave to Ariſtotle *the Care of making us reaſonable Beings.*

One ſees by this how little the Authority of Father *Rapin* is to be relied upon, eſpecially in reſpect to Philoſophers; and in as much as he is profuſe in his Praiſes of *Ariſtotle*, one need not be very much ſurpriſed at the Praiſe he beſtows on the *Spaniſh* Metaphyſicians. It is but a natural Conſequence of his way of thinking, all thoſe Metaphyſicians being zealous Followers of *Ariſtotle*. But to ſhew either the Ignorance or Knavery of our Critick, if there be ſo many excellent Philoſophers and Metaphyſicians in *Spain*, why did he not name ſome of them? This he could not poſſibly do, or at leaſt not without making himſelf ſtill more ridiculous than he juſtly was before.

To finiſh the Anſwer I have condeſcended to give to his Objections, I will endeavour to confute his Aſſertion, that I affect to decry the *Spaniſh* Nation. It is true that I ſaid, and do ſay it again, that they are proud, haughty, lazy, ſuperſtitious, and exceſſively ſubmiſſive to the Monks. But tho' I thus expoſed their Faults, as I have done thoſe of other Nations, I have done juſtice to their Virtues. Without repeating all I have ever ſaid on this Subject, I will here cite only a few Lines from my 106th Letter: *During the Reign of* Philip V. *there have been very able Men in the* Spaniſh

Spaniſh *Miniſtry*; *but the Storms to which all Courts are liable, have removed them from their Places. The Man that is moſt cried up here is Cardinal* Alberoni: *not only the Strangers, who are here in great numbers, but alſo many* Spaniards *do juſtice to that able Miniſter. . . . Since the Acceſſion of* Philip V. Spain *hath overcome half the Evils which were brought upon her by ſuch as were intruſted with the Adminiſtration of Affairs under* Philip IV. *and* Charles II. *Her Troops are numerous, brave, and well diſciplin'd. There's a fourth Part more People in the Country than there was, by means of the great numbers of* French *and* Flemings *who are ſettled there; and this Crown, which for one while was perfectly deſpiſed, makes as good a figure now, as it did formerly.*

I think I have now ſaid enough to ſhew the Folly, the Ignorance, and Knavery of this pretended *Iberian* Knight; for I ſhall not reply to his Invectives, and to thoſe groſs Reflections which he has thrown out againſt me in the cloſe of his Epiſtle. God forbid that I ſhould ever introduce the Language of Fiſh-ſtalls upon *Parnaſſus:* It is the Mind alone, and not the Body, which is a Member of the Republick of Letters. Were it not for this, how often ſhould we be confounded to know in what Rank ſome People ought to be placed?

Where,

Where, for Example, ſhould we beſtow a Man, who, after being in his Youth a Rope-Dancer, a Tumbler, a Player, in his Old-age married two Dreſſers of the Actreſſes one after another, and laſt of all, a Turky-Driver that was reduced to ſerve in an Alehouſe; and, which is ſtill meaner, to be his own Servant? Sure I am, that the Critic muſt allow if this *individual Perſon* was a Member of the Republick of Letters, it would be very difficult to find ſuch an Original a proper Station.

Before I conclude this Preface, I ſhall ſay a word or two of ſome Tranſlations made of the *Jewiſh Letters:* I am told there is a *Dutch* Tranſlation which will quickly appear, the MS. being actually in the Hands of a Bookſeller *. I have not ſeen it; and if I ſhould ſee it, I am no judge of it, ſince I underſtand not the Language: But one, who is a Maſter of it, ſays, that it is extremely well done, which is all I know of the matter, having not the leaſt Acquaintance with its Author. I am inform'd alſo from *Germany*, that the two firſt Volumes of the *Lettres Juives* are tranſlated into *High Dutch*.

But

* 'Tis juſt now printed at the *Hague*, and dedicated to me: I am very glad of this Opportunity of expreſſing my Gratitude for this piece of Civility, and the juſt Senſe I have of the Honour done me, in communicating my Letters to a Nation for whom I have an infinite Eſteem.

But what is ſtill more ſingular than all this beyond Compariſon is, that I have receiv'd Advice that they are actually re-printing this Work at *Avignon*, and that two Volumes of it are already publiſh'd, but miſerably mangled and deformed; which is the common Fate of every Edition that is counterfeited in the Pope's Dominions.

In the Preſs,

CHINESE LETTERS; or a PHILOSOPHICAL, HISTORICAL and CRITICAL CORRESPONDENCE between a *CHINESE* at *Paris*, and his Friends in *China*, *Muſcovy*, *Perſia* and *Japan*. By the Author of the *JEWISH SPY*.



THE JEWISH SPY.

LETTER CXXI.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a Rabbi, at* Conſtantinople.

YOU know, dear *Iſaac*, how much I was prejudiced againſt the Cabbaliſts. Shall I own to you my Weakneſs? Since I have been in this Country, a Converſation I had with a Perſon addicted to the occult Sciences, hath inclined me to believe that many Things I formerly thought ridiculous, are neither impoſſible nor incompatible with true Philoſophy. Not that I approve all that is ſaid by the Diſciples of *Paracelſus*. But I think, that tho' it is certain there are no ſuch Beings as *Gnomes*, *Sylphs*, *Salamanders*, and

Ondines *, yet there is nothing in the Belief of them abſurd, or contrary to the Laws of Nature, as moſt of our modern Philoſophers pretend. My Reaſons are theſe. What Weight they will have with you, I know not.

In order to deny the Poſſibility of Exiſtence to any Thing, there muſt be Proof not only of its Non-exiſtence, but of its Incapacity of Exiſtence. But I find no Proofs of the latter Sort againſt *Sylphs*, *Salamanders*, *Gnomes* and *Ondines*. What Impoſſibility is there in ſuppoſing, that there are animate Bodies compoſed of ſo ſubtile and delicate a Matter as not to fall under the Cognizance of our Senſes? We admit that they are not ſtrong enough to penetrate the Receſſes of Nature, where the firſt Elements of Things lie hid. They perceive none but the more groſs Cauſes. We can derive from thence no Right to deny, that thoſe delicate Principles are in being. Why then ſhould we believe, that there cannot be animated Creatures, compoſed of a Matter ſo thin as not to ſtrike our Senſes?

Before the Invention of Microſcopes, we knew not that Vinegar contained an aſtoniſhing Quantity of Worms; we boldly deny'd that there were little Fiſhes in all the Water we drank; and yet we have been many Years convinced of the Exiſtence of all theſe Animals. Since then, there is a Number of animated Creatures in Water, which our naked Eyes cannot diſcover, why may not the like be found in the Air and in the other Elements?

But it will be ſaid, *theſe Inſects are not concealed from us but through their Littleneſs, whereas it is pretended*

* According to the *Cabbaliſts*, the *Sylphs* inhabit the *Air*, the *Gnomes* the *Earth*, that is, within it, the *Salamanders* in the Region of *Fire*, and the *Ondines* the *Water*.



tended that the Gnomes, Sylphs, &c. *are of the ordinary Size of Men.*

To this I anſwer, that the Height of the Gnomes and of the Sylphs is no Reaſon why they ſhould become viſible, while the Parts of which they are compounded are ſuppoſed to be extremely delicate. A Space of Air ſix Foot long ſtrikes the Sight no more than one of a Foot or of an Inch. In like manner, ſuppoſing the Gnomes to be compoſed of a light and aerial Matter, their Stature would contribute nothing to their becoming viſible. Let us imagine a Column of thoſe Worms which are found in Vinegar, extending from the Earth to the Sky; our Eyes, without the Aſſiſtance of Microſcopes, would not be at all affected by this Column, notwithſtanding its immenſe Extenſion, becauſe its component Parts fall not under the Cognizance of our Senſes. Thus, tho' an infinite Number of Atoms fill up the Space between the Earth and the Moon, yet to us it appears void, becauſe the Matter with which it is filled, is not diſcernable by our Senſes. It is to no purpoſe, therefore, to oppoſe the Exiſtence of theſe Elementary People, by alledging, that we do not perceive them. It ſuffices to eſtabliſh the Poſſibility of the Thing, to prove that a great Number of living Creatures actually exiſt, which our Senſes, unaſſiſted, cannot diſcern.

When we once admit, that the Air may be peopled with inviſible Creatures, it naturally follows, that the Earth, the Water, and the Fire, which are Elements compoſed of Parts more eaſily united, have alſo in them the Power of producing a Number of Bodies which God may animate, and yet by the Delicacy of their Parts, they will eſcape our Senſes. *But*, reply the Philoſophers, *we have no Idea of theſe pretended reaſonable Creatures; we know not how*

they exiſt; we are intirely ignorant of their Forms and Figures, and it is ridiculous to admit a Thing of which we have not any Notion.

This manner of reaſoning, with Submiſſion to the Learned among the Moderns, is far from being concluſive. *Have you*, it may be replied to them, *any more diſtinct Notion of your own Soul? Do you comprehend any thing more about it, than that it is a Spirit? Do you know what Form or Figure it has? No, without doubt. You admit, however, its Exiſtence. Why then will you deny that of* Sylphs *and* Gnomes, *of which you have a leſs confuſed Idea than of a Spirit? Becauſe whatever is ſuppoſed to be material, however delicate it may be, falls under the Cognizance of the Human Underſtanding.*

The Wit of Man is ſo bounded, that it is not only very poſſible it may not have any Idea of certain Creatures; but it might even very eaſily happen, that a great Number of knowing People might, nevertheleſs, be ignorant of the Poſſibility of Animals living in Water. Let us ſuppoſe that a certain Number of Men live in a Country of a dry ſandy Soil, far from the Sea and Rivers, and furniſhed only with Pits. The Thing is by no means impoſſible. In many of the Deſarts of *Arabia* there is only ſuch Pits dug by the *Bedouins*. Theſe Men, without doubt, would have no Idea of Fiſh, if they did not hear of them from others. They would certainly look upon it as a Thing abſurd to ſuppoſe, that any Creature could live long in Water when they ſaw ſuch Land-Animals preſently die, as happen to fall therein. I ask, if Fiſh would exiſt the leſs, or if the Reaſonings of theſe ſort of People would deſtroy the Cod in the *Mediterranean*, or the Whales in the Ocean?

It is the ſame thing with reſpect to the Philoſophers

phers who deny the Poſſibility of *Sylphs* and of *Gnomes*; they know nothing of what paſſes in the Air; their ſhort Sight repreſents it to them as a great wide Space, a large and extended Maſs, and they pretend to judge of what paſſes in that Maſs by the Ideas they have of a void Space, which is intirely oppoſite thereto. For tho' the Philoſophers are perſuaded that the Extent between the Earth and the Firmament is full of Bodies; or, to expreſs my ſelf better, is one intire Body; yet their Senſes ſeem to get the better of their Meditations when they deny the Poſſibility of the exiſting of theſe elementary People.

You ſee, my dear *Iſaac*, the Reaſons upon which I ground my Opinion. As to the reſt, I am fully perſuaded that we cannot have any Sort of Commerce with theſe *Sylphs* and *Gnomes*. I ſay I am as fully perſuaded of the impoſſibility of this, as of the Poſſibility of their Exiſtence. Far from giving in to the ridiculous Tales and chimerical Viſions of the Cabaliſts, I affirm, that if there ſhould exiſt ſuch Elementary People, they can never render themſelves viſible to Men, as it is alſo impoſſible for Men to ſtrengthen or quicken their Senſes to ſuch a Degree as to be able to penetrate what God and Nature think proper to conceal from them. I can't help laughing when I hear a *Cabaliſt* gravely tell me, *That concentrating the Fire of the World by concave Mirrors in a Globe of Glaſs, gaining thereby a certain ſolar Powder, which being purified from the other Elements, and a certain Quantity thereof taken daily, I may exalt the Fire within me to ſuch a Degree, as to become, in ſome meaſure, of a fiery Nature.*

The Secret for obtaining the Familiarity of *Gnomes*, *Sylphs* and *Nymphs*, ſeems to me not a grain leſs ridiculous. It conſiſts *in taking a Glaſs*

full of Air, mingled with Water or with Earth; this is to be left for a Month expoſed to the Sun; then the Elements are to be ſeparated; which being performed, we have a wonderful Medicine, capable of exalting in us whatever Element we would have predominant, and of rendering our Senſes quick enough to diſcern theſe Elementary People *.

Good Senſe and the Light of Nature are ſufficient to ſhew me the Folly of this ſort of Reaſoning, and the Impoſſibility there is of effecting any Thing by theſe *Cabaliſtical Secrets*. For ſuppoſe I would make an Acquaintance with a *Salamander*, of what Uſe would all the ſolar Powder be that I could poſſibly amaſs together? Would it ever deſtroy in me that terreſtrial Matter that is every Day augmented by my Food? Could it ever get the better of the Air by which I live and breathe? Suppoſe I had ſwallowed ever ſo much of this Powder, a Quarter of an Hour after I take in a great Quantity of Air, and my Lungs, which receive and reject, my Noſtrils and my Mouth which give it Entrance into my Body, are the ſworn Enemies of the Element of Fire, which I would have predominant over the reſt. The ſame may be ſaid of the other Secrets, which tend to render ſome one Element predominant in Man, and thereby to give him an igneous or aquatic Nature.

The Blindneſs of the *Cabaliſts* goes yet a greater length. They aſſure us, that *by applying to the Navel a little of the Earth prepared for obtaining the Society of the* Gnomes, *one may ſuſtain the want of Food*

* The *Engliſh* Reader may ſee this Syſtem ſet in a beautiful Light in POPE'S RAPE *of the* LOCK. If he likes better to read it in Proſe, he may ſatisfy himſelf by peruſing Count *Gabalis*, whence our Author borrows his Quotations.

Food and Drink, without any ſort of Inconvenience. The famous *Paracelſus* affirms that he tried this; and it muſt be owned, that he was either a great Fool or an impudent Lyar, who durſt aſſert ſo evident an Impoſture as this is to the Face of the Publick.

I am not aſtoniſhed at all, when I ſee a *Cabaliſt* writing ſuch Impertinencies as theſe, becauſe at the ſame time I diſcern Stories as abſurd and as contrary to good Senſe, as gravely told by the moſt eminent Doctors in all Religions. How many Lyes have been written by our Rabbies on the Subject of the *Satyrs* and *Fauns* of Antiquity? Rabbi *Abraham* really imagined there were ſuch Creatures, but that they were imperfect, becauſe God was ſurprized by the Approach of the Evening of the Sabbath, and had not time ſufficient to make an end of them. Among the *Nazarenes*, *Tertullian*, *Juſtin*, *Lactantius*, *Cyprian*, *Clemens* of *Alexandria* and *Athenagoras*, fancied theſe *Fauns* were Angels transformed into this Shape for the Crime they committed, when God threw ſo many of them into Hell; and they concluded this Fall of Angels to have happened on account of their ſuffering themſelves to become enamour'd of Women. The *Pagans* puſh'd this Error ſtill farther; for they held theſe *Fauns* to be Divinities.

Among Sentiments ſo extraordinary as theſe are, it is impoſſible that a Philoſopher who makes uſe of his Reaſon, ſhould adopt any one of them. They are equally ridiculous and contrary to the Light of Nature. It may be even that the *Satyrs*, as deſcribed by the Ancients, never did exiſt; and that many uſeleſs Diſſertations have been made on the Ideas of ſome Painter or Poet, who was the Creator of theſe imaginary Beings. I am of opinion, that

vious to the explaining of a Thing, we ought ſeriouſly to conſider whether it exiſts, or whether ever it did exiſt. *Deſcartes* has given us a long Explication of the perpetual Lamps that are to be found in the Tombs of the Ancients; and we have ſince been convinced that the Fact is falſe. *Democritus* put his Wit to the torture for ſeveral Days to account for Wool which he fancied he had found growing on the Figs in his Garden. He made thereupon a Diſcourſe, with which himſelf and his Friends were very well ſatisfied. His Maid, however, diverted herſelf at their Expence by diſabuſing them, ſhewing that all the learned Reſearches of this Philoſopher was ſo much Study and Pains thrown away. It may be the *Fauns* of Antiquity greatly reſembled the Figs of *Democritus*; and thoſe who have made Diſſertations on theſe Half-Men Half-Brutes would be greatly ſurprized, if they ſhould find in any ancient Author, that they never exiſted any where but in his Imagination and in his Writings.

I will not however, dear *Iſaac*, pretend to affirm, that what is ſaid with regard to *Fauns*, ought to be conſidered, as invented at pleaſure; on the contrary, I believe their Exiſtence poſſible. We read in the Life of *Paul* the Hermit, written by *Jerome*, a famous Doctor among the *Nazarenes*, as alſo in that of *Anthony*, another Hermit, compoſed by *Athanaſius*, that theſe ſolitary Perſons had long Converſations with *Fauns*; and that they owned to them that they were not unacquainted with the Exiſtence of a Deity *. If we refuſe Credit to theſe Authors, we

* According to St. *Jerome*, St. *Anthony* met with a *Centaur*, exactly like what is deſcribed in the Poets. The ſame Author aſſures us, that not long after this St. *Anthony* ſaw alſo a *Satyr*, reſembling thoſe we ſee in Paintings. *Con-*

we find in *Pliny*, that *Satyrs* are frequent in the *Indies*. *Plutarch* aſſures us, that they preſented to *Sylla* as he paſs'd by *Dyrachium*, now *Durazzo* in *Albania*, a living Satyr. The *Roman* conſidered him attentively, but could make nothing of his Language, his Voice being exceſſively harſh, ſeeming to participate of the Neighing of a Horſe, and the Cry of a Goat *.

This Paſſage in Hiſtory inclines me to think, that all the Satyrs we hear of, were no other than Monſters produced by criminal Converſe between Mankind and the Females of other Animals; and that theſe Creatures, far from having Virtues ſuperior to Mortals, had much more of the Brute than of the Man, not being able to expreſs themſelves but in all reſpects like the Satyr of *Sylla*. The Superſtition of *Paganiſm* made Deities of theſe Half-Men, the *Nazarenes* will have them to be Angels or Demons, the *Jews* imperfect Creatures; the Philoſopher, ſeeming to diſdain the Examination of this Queſtion, contents himſelf with denying their Exiſtence, that he may not be obliged to explain their Natures.

Preſerve thy Health, dear *Iſaac*, live content and ſatisfied, and may the God of our Fathers heap Riches upon thee.

Hambourgh.

Conſpicit (Antonius) *hominem equo mixtum, cui opinio Poëtarum Hypocentauro vocabulum indidit . . . Nec mora inter ſaxoſum convallem haud grandem, homunculem vidit, aduncis naribus, fronte cornibus aſperatâ, cujus extrema pars corporis in caprarum pedes deſinebat.* Hieronymus epiſtol. iii. de vita Pauli, primi Eremitæ. *See alſo the 4th Part of the* Secret Memoirs of the Republick of Letters; *wherein the Wonders reported by St.* Jerome *are fully conſidered.*

* Plutarch *in the Life of* Sylla.

LETTER CXXII.

AARON MONCECA *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

I Don't know, dear *Iſaac*, to what Cauſe to attribute that violent Hatred which all People profeſs to have againſt thoſe of our Nation. Whatever Religion they have, in whatever Climate they inhabit, they ſeem to agree in this Point. The *Mahommedans*, the *Popiſh Nazarenes*, the *Reform'd*, the *Arminians* and the *Lutherans* deſpiſe, equally agree in deſpiſing us, and carry their Deſpite to Exceſs. I for ſome time thought that this Antipathy might be occaſioned by a Diverſity of Belief. But I was obliged to change this Way of thinking, when I ſaw Numbers differing in Religion, who had notwithſtanding the moſt perfect Eſteem for each other. The *Quakers* differ as widely as we from the *Nazarenes*; they have no Sacrament, not even ſo much as that of Baptiſm; however, the *Nazarenes* do not either hate or deſpiſe them.

We muſt look therefore for ſome other Cauſe than Religion, in order to account for that Antipathy which all Nations have to us. I do indeed believe, that Religion influences the lower Claſs of People in their Notions of *Jews*, in ſome meaſure; but it is certain, that it does not determine them intirely; wherefore, there muſt be ſome particular Subject whence the unanimous Hatred of all People muſt flow. Did it come purely from Difference in

point

point of Faith, why ſhould the *Turks* hate us more than they do the *Nazarenes?* Or theſe latter why ſhould they deteſt us more than *Turks?*

I believe, dear *Iſaac*, that we ought to ſeek in the evil Conduct of our own Brethren, what we generally attribute to Difference in Religion. If we credit certain *Nazarene* Hiſtorians, we ſhall find in their Writings, that the horrid Crimes of certain *Jews* have in all times had deſperate Conſequences in reſpect to our Nation. *Rigord*, Phyſician and Hiſtoriographer to *Philip Auguſtus* writes, that in 1180, our Brethren ſettled in *Paris* would needs make a Sacrifice on the Solemnization of the Paſſover, ſuppoſing they might draw down the divine Clemency, by immolating a *Nazarene*. They carried off, ſays he, a young Lad of twelve Years old, whoſe Name was *Richard*, the Son of a rich Tradeſman, and after they had almoſt by whipping tore off his Fleſh from his Bones, they crucified him. This barbarous Action coming to the knowledge of the *French*, all who had any Concern in this dreadful Sacrifice were put to death, and our whole Nation for ever baniſhed that Kingdom.

France is not the only Country wherein we are charged with ſuch Cruelties. The Inhabitants of the City of *Trent* commemorate annually a Thing of the ſame kind perpetrated on a little Boy called *Simonet*, the Son of a Shoemaker whoſe Name was *Simon*. The *Jews*, ſay they, having ſtript the Boy, did in the moſt cruel Manner draw out all his Blood, in order to make uſe of it in celebrating the Paſſover, and afterwards threw the Carcaſe into a common Shore, which ran under the Synagogue. The Thing being diſcovered, the *Jews* were ſeverely puniſhed, and the *Nazarenes* ſhew to this very Day, the Houſe in which this villainous Act was perpetrated.

I really cannot think of ſettling my Opinion as to theſe Facts, when I either read them or hear them talk'd of. I am throughly ſatisfied, that ſuch Cruelties are no where practiſed in our Synagogues at this Day, and I can hardly bring my ſelf to believe that they were ever practiſed heretofore. However, theſe Accounts are accompanied with ſuch Circumſtances, that it is almoſt impoſſible not to admit the Matters of Fact. But after all, if it were true that there were ſome *Jews* ſo wicked and ſo furious as to run into Exceſſes of this Sort, ought their Crimes to affect a whole Nation? There is nothing more eaſy, than the Proof that only a few mad and vile People were ever guilty of Things of this Nature, and that the *Jews* in general were not only ignorant of them, but if they had been acquainted with ſuch Practices would have had them in the utmoſt Deteſtation. In order to eſtabliſh this, we need only conſider what the Hiſtoriographer of *Philip Auguſtus* ſays. *He aſſures us, that the Criminals were puniſhed with Death, and the Remainder were baniſhed the Kingdom.* There were but fifteen or ſixteen *Jews* executed; if more had been found guilty, without doubt the *Nazarenes* would not have ſpared them. The whole Nation thus exiled, had nothing to do with theſe Cruelties. However, by aſtoniſhing ill Luck, that Horror which the Crime of a few particular People juſtly merited, reſted upon the Nation; and they are perſuaded in *France*, that the *Jews* in general approve of ſuch deteſtable Sacrifices. There needs no more, my Friend, to render them odious to the whole World: What can there be more ſcandalous to a Nation, than to have been driven out of a great Kingdom for ſuch abominable Deeds?

It is not ſolely to Prejudices of this ſort that we ought

ought to attribute the Averſion and the Diſlike which People have towards us. The ſordid Avarice, and the Perfidy of ſome of our Brethren, have made us mortally hated. Thus the innocent ſuffer for the Crime of the guilty, and a Number of *Iſraelites* worthy the Eſteem of all honeſt Men, zealous Obſervers of the divine Law, are without Diſtinction confounded with People whom themſelves deſpiſe, and whom they are the moſt ready to condemn.

Our Rabbins ought to apply themſelves to writing Books of Morality. Such Works would be much more uſeful, and do us more honour among ſuch as differ from us in Religion, than that monſtrous Heap of Viſions which are to be found in moſt of our Authors, and which ſerve only to diſcredit our Writers and our Nation. I would be content to ſee our Doctors attentive in explaining the Law, and in applying it principally to the diſcouraging the Practice of thoſe Vices moſt reigning amongſt us; inſiſting conſtantly on the heinouſneſs of the Act of taking away another Man's Property in the Sight of God, and the Baſeneſs of Uſury in the Sight of Men. If they could once bring this Doctrine to prevail, and could induce our Brethren to be leſs attached to, and ſuſceptible of the Temptation of filthy Lucre, I doubt not but they would enable them to regain the Eſteem and Regard of all Nations. Why ſhould they refuſe it us, if we were worthy of it? I have before ſhewn, that Difference in Religion is not a Reaſon which determines the Eſteem or the Diſlike of Men. Beſides, dear *Iſaac*, ours hath in itſelf ſuch Beauties, that if the *Jews* were once become a virtuous People, they would be at leaſt ſecure of the Friendſhip of Philoſophers, learned and reaſonable Men. But far, my Friend,

very

very far are the Rabbins from endeavouring to eradicate Avarice from the Hearts of the *Iſraelites*, on the contrary, they are the firſt themſelves of giving Examples of ſordid Covetouſneſs; inſomuch, that it may be ſaid of the Prayers in our Synagogues, as one of the Ancients ſaid of thoſe heretofore made by the *Pagans: Do we obſerve*, ſays he, *any go to the Temples in order to beſeech the Gods to give him Perfection in Eloquence, or to diſcover to him the Secrets of Philoſophy? Nay, do they ſo much as ask Rectitude of Mind, or Health of Body? But of all who go to the Capitol, this is the Cuſtom, before they reach the very Threſhold of the Gate, the one promiſes great Offerings to the Deity he worſhips, provided he haſtens the Death of a rich Relation; another, that he may diſcover a hidden Treaſure; a third, that he may be lucky enough to acquire a large Eſtate in Buſineſs* *.

Such are the Prayers which moſt of the *Jews* offer to the Divinity. They forget that they are forbidden in the Law to wiſh for the Goods of another, and the Rabbins, far from putting them in mind of this divine Precept, ſeem to have baniſhed it entirely from their own Thoughts. After this we need not think it ſtrange that the *Nazarenes* have propagated a certain malicious Fable againſt us, *viz.* That we have made an Oath to cheat as often as we have an Opportunity. They judge of our Precepts by our Actions. I am ſenſible, my Friend,

* *Quis unquam venit in templum & votum fecit, ſi ad eloquentiam perveniſſet? Quis, ſi philoſophiæ fontem inveniſſet? Ac ne bonam quidem mentem, aut bonam valetudinem petunt. Sed ſtatim antequam limen Capitolii tangant, alius donum promittit, ſi propinquum divitem extulerit; alius ſi theſaurum effoderit; alius ſi ad trecenties H. S. ſalvus pervenerit.* Petronius in Satir.

Friend, that the famous *Leo* of *Modena* hath refuted with great Quickneſs ſuch as have endeavoured to fix ſo criminal a Uſage upon us, and hath well ſhewn how far we are from following ſuch pernicious Maxims, or from regarding them as Points of Doctrine. But notwithſtanding the learned Writings of that excellent *Jew*, there are at this Day a Multitude of *Nazarenes* who perſuade themſelves they do not do us the leaſt Injuſtice in imputing to us this criminal Sentiment.

We ſhall never be able to regain the Eſteem of other Nations, but by changing our Conduct intirely, and becoming as remarkable for our Diſintereſtedneſs, as we are at preſent for our Avarice. Not that I pretend to prevent our Brethren from making an honeſt Profit, or from gaining by Commerce. There is nothing more lawful. What I would be at is this; that they ſhould be more ſincere, and that Uprightneſs and Candour ſhould be viſible in all their Dealings.

When I have defended this Opinion againſt *Jews* of a contrary Sentiment, and who did not think we were bound to uſe ſo much Delicacy in our Dealings with the *Nazarenes*, I could never perceive any Strength in their Reaſons. *We pay*, ſay they, *exorbitant Impoſts. Princes, in many Countries look upon us as ſo many Beaſts. They ſell us the very Air that we breathe. 'Tis by Dint of Money that we obtain a Reſidence among them. In ſome Towns of* Germany *they oblige us to pay twenty Pence an Hour as long as we ſtay. Is not this an aſtoniſhing Impoſition? Are we obliged to act with Candour towards thoſe who ſo cruelly perſecute us? And are we not at Liberty to make Repriſals on the* Nazarenes, *who thus enrich themſelves by our Labours?*

Whatever at firſt Sight there may ſeem to be in theſe

theſe Reaſons, they are intirely overthrown by this ſingle Principle, that it is not juſtifiable to commit one Crime in order to puniſh another. In this reſpect I find the Morality of the *Nazarenes* admirable. It muſt be owned that they do not practiſe it; but it is however one of the principal Points of their Religion, that we are not to commit Evil upon any Account. Their civil Laws agree on this Subject with their religious Precepts. It muſt be owned there are ſome *Ultramontane* Doctors who have maintained this impious Principle, *That Subjects may revolt againſt their Princes when they are Hereticks.* But theſe deteſtable Opinions have been condemned in all Nations whoſe Superſtition hath not ſtifled the Senſe of Honour and Religion. The Parliaments of *France* have ordered Books containing ſuch Principles to be torn by the Hands of the Hangman, and the Univerſities have fully refuted them. To ſay the Truth, Princes themſelves, who are ſo much outraged by the ſpreading of ſuch Notions, have ſometimes ſhewn no great Liking to that Zeal with which they have been condemned, which muſt to thee appear incomprehenſible. However, hitherto *France* and *Germany* have rejected with Horror all Doctrines tending to violate the Reſpect due to Sovereigns.

It is to the Love of their Subjects that many Princes owe the Preſervation of their Glory. While they are abſorbed in Pleaſures, and ſeem quite to forget the high Rank they poſſeſs; *Rome*, always ambitious, and always attentive to the Means of overturning the Rights of Kings, fails not of making Attempts againſt their Authorities: But the People being alarmed at the firſt Appearance of a Novelty, big with pernicious Conſequences, oppoſe thereby ſo ſtrong a Barrier to the Ambition of the So-

Sovereign Pontiffs, as affords Princes time to awake out of their Lethargy and to defend their Rights.

Take Care of thy ſelf, dear *Iſaac*, and may the God of our Fathers render thee proſperous.

Hamburgh.

LETTER CXXIII.

ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, heretofore a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople, *to* AARON MONCECA.

I Divert my ſelf with conſidering daily the different Syſtems of Philoſophers, without giving however intire Credit to any. I conſider them all as probable, but I believe there is none without its Difficulties, and in which it is by no means hard to find weak Places, if one were inclined to attack them. I leave to a certain Race of Wrongheads that Adoration which they pretend to pay to their favourite Authors. Whatever the Reputation of a Philoſopher may be, I never ſuffer it to draw me into a falſe Admiration of him. There are, in my Opinion, many Things hid from all Men, and which the modern Philoſophers have not a bit better explained than the Ancients.

An *Arabian* of my Acquaintance has within theſe few Days lent me a Manuſcript. I have read it with Attention. I find many things in it very amuſing: But, upon the whole, I think there is very little Inſtruction to be gathered from the whole Work. The Author's Scheme is this: He pre-

tends,

tends, that Men, Animals, and all that we ſee inveſted with Life, were produced by the Sea. The firſt Fault I find with this Syſtem is, that it is directly oppoſite to the Exiſtence of a Deity. As I have an infinite Contempt for ſuch blind Philoſophers as are not ſtruck with this firſt and apparent Truth, ſo you may gueſs that there is in this Syſtem ſomething very pleaſant and very whimſical, ſince notwithſtanding this capital Error I could read it with any Pleaſure. See then in few Words a brief Expoſition of this Syſtem.

The *Arabian* Author pretends, That there hath happened inſenſibly a great Change in the Earth, ſo that what we now ſee dry, was heretofore covered with Water. He affirms, that the Sea and Waters waſted by Degrees, and the Earth being dried by the Heat of the Sun, did after many Ages aſſume much the ſame Form that it has at preſent.

This is his Syſtem with reſpect to the World in general. Now, let me tell you what he ſays in particular of Man, and other terreſtrial Animals. When the Waters were conſumed to a certain Degree, and of courſe a certain Part of the Earth lay bare, ſome aquatick Animals accuſtomed themſelves by little and little, to go and browſe and feed upon the Graſs; that the Man, the Ox, the Horſe, *&c.* conſtantly went back at firſt into the Water; but, in proceſs of Time going farther and farther from the Bank, they in the end accuſtomed themſelves to live on the Earth. The Sun, by the Heat of his Rays, quickly altered the Texture of their Skins, and gave to ſome of them Hair and Hides, as we ſee them have. He pretends, that Habit, which is a ſecond Nature, did in proceſs of Time make the Iſſue of theſe aquatick Animals incapable of living any where but in the Earth. That

in

in like manner, the Birds too loſt the Capacity of entering the Waters, becauſe they were not accuſtomed to it from the time of their being hatch'd, except in ſuch as were call'd Sea and River Fowl; the Parents of which had never ſtrayed far from their Mother-Element. In ſupport of this extraordinary Doctrine, our Author reaſons thus: *We ſee that the Sun changes intirely the Form and Colour of Men; Children are born white in the midſt of* Ethiopia, *and the firſt Covering of their Heads is Hair, and not Wool. It is not till ſome Days after that they become black; and there is a very conſiderable Space intervenes before any thing like Wool appears. The Reaſon of this is, becauſe Men always retain a ſtrong Tincture of their firſt Quality; and that during the time Men were aquatick Animals, they were all white, and had none of them Wool in place of Hair; but ſince they have quitted their ancient Element, they have been chang'd more or leſs according as the Vapors of the Earth, or the Heat of the Sun have operated upon them.*

All Animals, continues the *Arab* Writer, *retain even to this Day ſome of their firſt Qualities. There are none of them, but what can ſwim and live for ſome time in the Water; the Cow, the Horſe, the Dog, and all other Creatures ſwim naturally; Man would do the ſame thing, if Fear did not hinder Nature from exerting thoſe Motions with which, however, ſhe is very well acquainted. In ſome Seas Sea-Men are yet found; the* Dutch *Hiſtorians mention a Girl who was preſerved a long time at* Harlem *about three hundred Years ago, and who was ſtopt upon the Shore juſt as ſhe came out of the Sea. In many other Countries, Creatures have been ſeen half Fiſh, half of a human Form, all which is ſufficient to ſhew, that the Element of Water is by no means incompatible with an organized*

Body

Body like to that of Man; and that there is nothing but Habit, and their being accuſtomed from their Birth to breathe the dry Air on ſhore, which hinders Men from living in the Bottom of the Sea.

See, my dear Friend, the Scheme of this *Arabian*, who is to this Day buſy in finding out Proofs of his Hypotheſis. He asked me my Opinion. I told him very ſincerely, that all Syſtems which did not admit the Exiſtence of a Deity, and which ſuppoſed as the firſt Principle of all Things, a certain Arrangement of Matter by the Hand of Chance, would fall into unſuſtainable Opinions, by building a Caſtle on the Sands, which the ſlighteſt Motion muſt overturn from Top to Bottom.

It is indeed a ſurprizing thing, that the Philoſophers did not perfectly comprehend the Neceſſity of a Thing which the moſt ſimple People now-a-days clearly ſee the Truth of. The moſt ſublime Verities, ſays an *Engliſh* Author *, which were ſcarce acceſſable to the brighteſt and beſt cultivated Wits among the *Pagans*, are at preſent become familiar, even to the moſt confined Underſtandings. This opens a large Field of ſatisfactory Reflections to a Man who conſiders Things with the Eye of a Philoſopher, and who poſſeſſes a Soul capable of being charmed at the mighty Progreſs which uſeful Knowledge hath made among Mankind.

What, my Friend, would all the *Greek* and *Roman* Philoſophers ſay, who after thirty or forty Years ſpent in Study, acquired ſo imperfect an Idea of the Deity? What, I repeat it, would they ſay, if they were to return to the World, and find every little Scholar in Philoſophy able to ſhew them with the greateſt Clearneſs, that God is not material, becauſe whatſoever is corporal is ſubject to Diviſion;

* The Spectator.

ſion; and whatſoever can be divided, cannot be God. For then either there muſt be as many Gods as Parts, or the Deity muſt be compounded of certain Parts not divine.

The Aſtoniſhment of theſe Philoſophers would ſtill increaſe, when they were ſhewn how great their Error was in admitting Matter to be co-eternal with God. They would learn, that there could be nothing co-eternal with him, ſince he could not then be Almighty. For not having created Matter he could not deſtroy it. Now, it is equally ridiculous to affirm, that a Thing which has no Beginning can have an End, or that God can exiſt and not be Almighty. Theſe *Greeks* and *Romans*, of whom ſome boaſt ſo much, would be ſurprized that they themſelves did not make theſe Reflections, or that the Prejudices imbibed in their Infancy, and ſtrengthened by Education, ſhould be able to hinder them from coming at ſuch clear and eaſy Truths.

It is to us, it is to us, *Monceca*, that the whole World is indebted for the Knowledge of God. The firſt *Nazarenes* who taught the Heathens the Unity and Spirituality of the Divinity, were *Jews* ſeparating from our Communion. Paſſion has made our Brethren ſay a great deal of Ill of them. However, it muſt be allowed that they were truly great Men, who hazarded their Lives to withdraw the human Species from Idolatry; if the Unity of God hath been preached throughout the Univerſe, it is ſolely owing to them.

When I was a *Rabbi* at *Conſtantinople* I durſt not talk in this Style. My Brethren would have looked upon me with Horror; they would have taxed me with inclining to *Nazareniſm*, as if one ought not to render Juſtice to Merit wherever it is found; and

and that the Difference of Belief obliges one to diſguiſe one's Sentiments, and to deſpiſe People really worthy of Eſteem. Let us, my Friend, leave this Madneſs to narrow Minds. It is a Conduct only worthy of Blockheads and Fanaticks; and when we ſee a Man of true Genius run into Invectives againſt People of Probity, one may boldly affirm, that it is not his Zeal for Religion, but his Ambition, Hatred, or ſome other Paſſion, which moves him thereto. When *Paſcal* wrote his *Provincial* Letters, he thought leſs of defending *Nazareniſm* than of outraging the *Jeſuits*; and when thoſe People perſecuted *Arnauld*, it was the deſtroying of their Enemy, and not the Good of Religion that they had in View. Too many Divines who dip in Controverſy, hate their Adverſaries more than the Errors they maintain. It is the ſame thing with other Writers, when they come to differ with each other; they do not criticiſe a Work becauſe it is ill written, but becauſe it is written by an Adverſary.

When I was in *Germany*, I was acquainted with two Authors who were continually praiſing each other. The one was the eldeſt Son of *Apollo*, the other the Darling and the Favourite of the Muſes. After all, they fell out on account of a Piece which the one wrote, and the other, contrary to his Cuſtom, found ſome fault with. This was ſufficient to ſow everlaſting Diviſion. They wrote againſt each other immediately with all the Vehemence imaginable; they publiſhed mutual Edicts of Baniſhment from *Parnaſſus*, and ſupported theſe new Sentiments of theirs in all Companies with a Petulancy not to be endured. They blamed exceſſively thoſe very Pieces which they had before as much commended; nor can I conceive how they could, after ſaying ſo many handſome Things the one of the other,

ther, deviate into ſuch Scurrility and Abuſe. *This Conduct*, ſaid I to one of them, *will hurt you in the Opinion of the World. What would you have your Readers think of your Works, when they find you blaming now what you commended a while ago. They will believe, and with Reaſon, that you commend without Grounds, and that you cenſure without Cauſe. What ſignifies that*, reply'd the Author, *provided I can but deſtroy the Praiſes that I have formerly given the Man who has had the Confidence to blame my Writings, I am content. I praiſed him becauſe he praiſed me, and I cenſure him becauſe he cenſured me. If he was to write even better than he did, I will perſiſt always in ſaying, that he writes nothing worth reading.*

This is the manner, dear *Aaron*, in which Authors generally treat each other. There are very few amongſt them who commend their Brethren without Hopes of Return. In the Republick of Letters, Eulogies are a Sort of Goods in which there is always a great Trade. I believe it is pretty much the ſame thing in all other States; when one praiſes a Perſon, one is apt to be uneaſy if he ſays nothing in return. Self-love is deeply wounded by that Silence which mortifies the natural Vanity of Men, and which ſeems to imply a mighty Superiority in him who receives, over him who beſtows Panegyrick.

I believe, my Friend, that we may lay it down as a general Principle, that moſt Men commend from one of theſe two Motives; either that they may be commended, or that they may be rewarded. There are very few, who from the ſole Principle of doing Juſtice to Merit, make it their Practice to ſpeak well of the good Qualities of others. It is true, that generally ſpeaking, we look upon this noble

noble and generous Way of Proceeding, as a Virtue frequently to be met with; but if we examine Things more closely, we shall find that the Number of these disinterested People is but small.

Be careful of your self, dear *Monceca*, live content and happy, and excuse my writing to you so seldom.

Cairo.

LETTER CXXIV.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Constantinople.

THE *Nazarenes* have a laudable Custom, which I cannot help blaming our Ancestors for not having observed. They go to the very Extremities of the World, in order to preach the Existence of one God, All-good, All-mighty and All-merciful, There is no Country, how barbarous, how distant soever, whither they have not gone to destroy Idols, and to insult them on their Altars. If these People used a little more softness in their manner of communicating these sublime Truths, and if their Behaviour were not in some kind inconsistent with the Doctrines which they preach, I should look upon these Missionaries as the greatest and most deserving Men in the Universe. Is there, in effect, any thing so glorious, as for Men to devote themselves intirely to the Service of an infinite Number of Persons, under the Slavery of most absurd Opinions, and plung'd in

in the frightful Abyſs of Idolatry? Is there, I ſay, any thing more noble than to make the Delivery of ſuch Perſons the Buſineſs of one's Life?

If ſuch as make it their Employment to enlighten theſe unfortunate *Pagans*, contented themſelves with exerting Reaſon and good Senſe, inſtead of uſing Force and Violence when they have it in their power, Idolatrous Nations would much ſooner be perſuaded of the Exiſtence and Unity of God. But the Cruelties which the *Spaniards* and *Portugueſe* have exerciſed in certain Countries, and which are far from being unknown to other ſavage Nations, give them an extraordinary Hatred and unconquerable Averſion towards ſuch as come to inſtruct them. What is it one can really imagine an *Indian* can think of thoſe terrible Executions he hears to have been done by the Inquiſition at *Goa*? *Theſe Folks*, will he ſay to himſelf, *who come to inform me of a God, perfectly good, and merciful in all things, offer up daily Numbers of their Brethren to this ſame God, and are continually ſprinkling this great Altar of his the Earth, with the Blood of his Creatures. They moſt cruelly commit to the Flames, Men of the greateſt Worth and Probity, becauſe they have not Power enough over their own Minds, to force the Belief of certain Propoſitions which ſeem to them contrary to Equity and Reaſon. The Fierceneſs and Cruelty of a Miſſionary in thoſe Countries, where their Power is eſtabliſh'd, hinders the Fruit of their Arguments, even where they uſe no other Weapons.*

You will ask me perhaps, my Friend, how it comes to paſs that I, who am a *Jew*, ſhould intereſt my ſelf in the Propagation of the Faith of the *Nazarenes*? The Anſwer is eaſy and natural. It is not the Propagation of the Principles of the *Nazarene* Religion for which I am concerned, but the propagating the Knowledge of the Deity. You know

that I have always thought, as well as you, that Men might be ſaved in all Religions, provided they were truly virtuous. Now there is nothing ſo capable of leading Men to the Practice of Honeſty and Virtue as the Senſe of a Divine Being, provided it be not clouded, or in a manner extinguiſhed by an inſupportable Load of incomprehenſible and contradictory Doctrines, and of Ceremonies equally ridiculous and vain. We ought naturally to wiſh the Good, and to deſire the Salvation of all Mankind. We are therefore obliged to the Miſſionaries, who by their Preaching facilitate the ſaving ſuch as are ſunk in Idolatry, by teaching them the Knowledge of God and of his Will. There is no Philoſopher, of what Religion ſoever he be, who can think otherwiſe, if at leaſt he does not ſuffer himſelf to be blinded by his Prejudices, and by an unreaſonable Hatred of thoſe who are not of his own Opinion in all things.

It were to be wiſh'd, that when the *Jews* were diſperſed, after *Titus* had deſtroyed *Jeruſalem*, they had followed this Maxim of the *Nazarenes*, and had made it their Buſineſs to preach and to propagate the Law of *Moſes* throughout the Univerſe, inſtead of keeping to themſelves thoſe Treaſures which they received from Heaven. Had they acted thus, one can hardly conceive, that the Number of Miſſionaries conſidered, and the Beauty of that Religion adverted to, which theſe Miſſionaries were to preach; I ſay, a proper Weight given to theſe Things, one can ſcarce believe they could have fail'd perſuading all the Nations in the World. What Weapons could either Ignorance or Superſtition have oppoſed to the ſimple and evident Truths they would have revealed?

The more I conſider my Religion, the more I am convinced that it is equally reaſonable and magnificent.

nificent. One only God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, a Being infinitely wiſe and good, who preſerves and governs the Univerſe by his Power, who will puniſh the Wicked, and who will reward the Good. The Wicked, who are they? Such as preſume to do unto others what they would not bear to be done to themſelves: And the Good, who are they? Such as, not content with avoiding any Injuſtice towards their Neighbour, practiſe alſo towards him whatſoever they wiſh he ſhould practiſe towards them, as my Friend the *Latin* Poet happily expreſſes it in one Line:

Quæ tibi vis fieri, facias. Hæc ſummula legis.

To others do, what you from them expect,
Nor ever this the *Sum* of *Law* neglect.

Here, my Friend, is the whole of our Religion. All its Precepts are contained within this narrow Compaſs. Whatever our Rabbins have added, may be conſidered, if you pleaſe, as uſeleſs and ſuperfluous. What Mortal, who makes the leaſt Uſe of his Reaſon, but muſt acknowledge the Evidence of the Truths we declare, and give them his Aſſent? I repeat it again, my Friend, that if we had been poſſeſſed of a Zeal like that of the *Nazarenes*, for making known the Beauty and Sanctity of our Religion, we had certainly drawn to us a Number of Proſelytes. But ſince our People, either through Negligence, or which is the real Truth, out of a Diſlike of other Nations, hath neglected to make known to them the Deity, we ought, as Philoſophers, to be charm'd when we perceive that the Miſſionaries have ſupplied our Defect, and have done to Mankind that Service which we diſdained to render them.

Many of the *Nazarenes* have written in ſharp Terms againſt their Miſſionaries; they have reproach'd them on the head of their bad Conduct, and have alledged that they have fruſtrated thereby the good Deſign they went upon. Theſe Reflections have made ſome haſty People conclude, that all the Miſſionaries have been alike wanting in their Duty. But this is giving in to an apparent Error: We may ſay without exaggerating, that the Good they have done very far ſurpaſſes the Evil. It is true that ſome Inſtances may be given, where Slips of theirs have deſtroyed the Fruits of many Years Application. However, the Crimes of particular People ought not to fall upon Miſſionaries in general. I own it were to be wiſh'd there had never gone to the *Indies*, or into other Countries inhabited by Idolaters, any but *French* and *German* Miſſionaries, bred up in Countries where the Inquiſition is abhorr'd. For theſe Preachers, if we except a few of a certain Order, ſeldom make uſe of any violent Meaſures; and this Tenderneſs of theirs, is much more uſeful and efficacious in the Buſineſs of their Miſſion, than the Fierceneſs of the *Spaniards* and *Portugueſe*. One of the laſt mentioned Nation, whoſe Name was *Menezes*, made ſeveral Attempts in order to the Converſion of the Inhabitants of the Iſland of *Zocotora*; but the extraordinary Cruelties he had exerciſed amongſt other People, where he was ſupported by the Power of the King of *Cochin*, induced theſe Iſlanders to revolt rather than receive him. *They fell into a Rage*, ſays a *Nazarene* Hiſtorian *, *at the very mention of their embracing the Religion of the* Portugueſe. *Nay, they carried their Averſion ſo far as to proteſt, that they would rather ſuffer*

* Diſſertations Hiſtoriques & Recherchés ſur la Religion Chrètienne dans les Indes, p. 304.

fer Death than embrace the Opinions taught by thoſe Miſſionaries, whom they ſtiled a perverſe and infamous Race of Men.

Another Miſſionary, whoſe Name was *Alphonſo Mendez*, demoliſhed all that his Predeceſſors had been doing. As he was a Jeſuit, his Enemies made that a Pretext to attack the Order. They publiſhed ſeveral Pieces, wherein they accuſed the Jeſuits in general of prejudicing the Miſſions; but in theſe they exaggerated many Things, and in ſome others diſguiſed the Truth not a little. To do Juſtice, it muſt be acknowledged, that the Miſſionaries of this Order have made a great Progreſs in Countries, where before their Arrival the People had not any right Notions of the Deity, and that they commonly behave with a great deal of Tenderneſs. Nay, they are reproached with being but too tractable, and with having puſh'd beyond its proper Extent, their Complaiſance for the Idolaters they had to do with. But whichever way they take it, it is impoſſible for them to content all People, or to hinder their Enemies from finding fault with their Conduct. The diſintereſted part, however, of their Adverſaries do them Juſtice, and acknowledge that there have been in the *Indies*, and elſewhere, Men of their Order of great Worth and Probity. Let me quote to you what a reformed *Nazarene* *, who is of courſe an Enemy to the Jeſuits, has ſaid upon this Subject. "Chriſtianity "ſeems more effectually ſettled in *China* than in "any of the Countries where the Order hath been "employed in planting the Faith. The Jeſuits "have had in this Miſſion many great Men, ſuch "as the Fathers *Riccius*, *Martinius*, *Schalt*, *Ver-*

 "*bieſt*,

* Diſſertations Hiſtoriques & Recherchés ſur la Religion Chrètienne dans les Indes, p. 318.

" *bieſt*, and very many others. It would be In-
" juſtice to refuſe theſe great Men the Praiſes
" which are due to them. For my part, I enter
" not at preſent into the Diſputes which ſubſiſt be-
" tween them and the other Miſſionaries. It may
" be, that the Jeſuits are not altogether free from
" Blame; but the Conduct of their Adverſaries is
" not however void of Paſſion. Do they not e-
" vidently ſhew too great a Pleaſure in mortifying
" the Jeſuits on account of the Inſults they pre-
" tend to have received from them?"

This Paſſage ſets in its proper Light the Grounds of thoſe Reproaches thrown out againſt the Jeſuit Miſſionaries. The Hatred which is borne to their Order in *Europe*, extends itſelf even to thoſe who are employ'd in the *Indies* in preaching the Unity of God. They reproach ſome with their too great Complaiſance in *China*; they object to others their Cruelty, and their Loading the Minds of the *Indians* too ſoon and too heavily with the Belief of Myſteries. Thus they condemn in the firſt what they would have practiſed by the latter, and plainly ſhew, that their Quarrel with the Miſſionaries is a mere Pretence for charging on the Jeſuits all the Evils that fall out in all Places.

I muſt own to you, my Friend, that I have often thought they lay too many things to the Charge of theſe Fathers. There ſcarce falls out any Miſchief but they are reproached with it. I am ſenſible that they are vain, ambitious and revengeful; but I know too, that their Adverſaries are apt to extend things againſt them to extravagancy, and to load them with imaginary Crimes. One *Angelinus Gazæus*, a Jeſuit, hath on this head written ſome *Latin* Verſes, which expreſs very happily this Folly of attributing whatever falls out amiſs, to that Or-

Order *. The Senſe of them is this:

Eve, the Jeſuits believed,
They *Adam* made the Apple eat;
Abel by Jeſuits deceived,
Cain, at their Suit, his Brains out beat.

It were to be wiſh'd, that Divines had never anſwered in any other manner than this, to the groundleſs Reproaches thrown out againſt them: We ſhould not then have ſuch an enormous Load of Books, full of nothing but Complaints and ill Language. For my part, I cannot comprehend how grave People can ſpend their Time in writing ſuch Heaps of Invectives; a quick Pleaſantry like this of the Jeſuit, renders a falſe Accuſation more evident and more ridiculous than a long pedantick Apology. All the Volumes that have been written againſt the Jeſuits never gave them ſo much Trouble as the *Provincial Letters*, where *Paſcal* has continually in mind *Horace*'s Maxim,

. . . . . *Ridiculum acri*
Fortius & melius magnas plerumque ſecat res.

If *Paſcal* had refuted the *Spaniſh* Divines with all the Pomp of the Schools, the *Jeſuits* had not fail'd, in their Turns, to have ſent abroad a Number of Books in defence of their Brethren. They would in this Caſe have done no more than mutually embaraſs the Subject on which they writ; and after fatiguing themſelves and the Publick, with a Multitude

* The *Latin* Verſes run thus:
Pomum Marito, Jeſuitis credulo,
Porrexit Eva, Jeſuitis credula:
Fratrem Cainus, Jeſuitis credulus,
Occidet Abel, Jeſuitis credulum.

titude of Pieces on the one ſide, and on the other, which, however, none but themſelves or their Friends would have particularly examined; the thing had reſted there, and the generality of the World known no more than when they began to write. But the Thing ſtands now in quite a contrary State; the ingenious, but malicious Method taken by *Paſcal*, hath in ſix Months time made that evident to all *Europe*, of which all its Univerſities could not convince the Publick in a hundred Years.

Take care of your ſelf, my Friend, live happy and contented, and may our God beſtow on you great and laſting Proſperity.

Hamburgh.

LETTER CXXV.

AARON MONCECA, *to* JACOB BRITO.

YOur Letters upon the *Spaniſh* Nation, my dear *Brito*, gave me infinite Pleaſure, and I wiſh from my Heart, that thoſe which I write you, may prove as uſeful and as agreeable. I concur with you in your Reflections; they are ſenſible and juſt. One only appears to me contrary to the Law of Nature, and contrary to that Equality which a Philoſopher allows to all Mankind. You cenſure a Cuſtom which the *Nazarene* Pontiffs approved in a certain Aſſembly *, and which allows a Man, in whatſoever State born, Freedom of Choice in a Wife.

* Council of *Trent*.

Wife. You ſay, that ſuch a Permiſſion as this, is contrary to paternal Authority, deſtructive of that Order which ought to be obſerved in all States, and of the Subordination which ought to ſubſiſt in all Places, for the Good of Society. I muſt own to you, that in this I am not at all of your mind, but on the contrary, admire the Wiſdom and Prudence of theſe *Nazarenes*, who, conſcious that all Men were the Children of one Father, did not think proper to authorize thoſe chimerical Diſtinctions, which, in proceſs of time, Pride, Sin, and Vanity have introduced. Beſides, what is it to the Good of the State, whether a particular Perſon be a little more, or a little leſs rich, provided theſe Riches remain in the Society? Nay, to ſpeak the truth, the more equally they are parted, ſo much the more will Trade flouriſh. Equality among Citizens is the very Baſis of Commerce. In ſuch States as have a Nobility aggrandiz'd by extraordinary Privileges, Trade is more cramp'd than in others. In order to prove this Fact, we need but compare the Riches of particular Perſons amongſt the *Dutch* and *Engliſh* with the *French* and *Germans*. This will be ſufficient to ſhew us what mighty Benefits a People reap by cheriſhing this Equality, and by refuſing to introduce thoſe Diſtinctions which break the Harmony of Society, and by exalting the Spirits of particular Perſons, mortify at the ſame time others, ſo as to deprive them of that Quickneſs, Boldneſs and Penetration which is neceſſary to render them ſucceſsful in Trade.

I can by no means think, that Cuſtom which prevails among the *French*, the Right of diſſolving thoſe Marriages which they are pleaſed to ſtile unequal, and thereby ſeparating two Perſons whom Love has united, and who, in the Preſence of the Deity, have ſworn eternal Tenderneſs to each other.

This is a Species of Tyranny which is a Remnant of thoſe too exalted Privileges which the *Romans* extended heretofore to the Fathers of Families. Theſe Laws in favour of paternal Authority have drawn along with them great Inconveniencies, and by giving to the Heads of Houſes an abſolute Aſcendance over their Families, have expoſed many reaſonable Beings to the Caprice of one. In vain the old *Roman Lawyers* ſet up the Tenderneſs of Fathers, as an Excuſe for veſting in them this extravagant Power. Fathers, as well as their Children, are ſubject to all the Paſſions, and all the Frailties of human Nature. How often do we ſee them hate their Children without Reaſon, and fooliſhly diſſipate the Eſtates which they ought to leave to them? How often do we ſee them ſacrifice their Families to their Ambition? And how frequently may we diſcern in their Oppoſition to their Families in a certain Way, a ſecret Jealouſy leſt their Children ſhould be happier than themſelves?

I believe, my Friend, that the Duties between Parents and Children are reciprocal. This is the Sentiment of a *French* Poet *. Let me cite a couple of Verſes which he puts into the Mouth of a diſtreſt Son,

O cruel Parents! Are not your Rights ours?
The Ties of Duty, are not they too yours?
Theſe then ſhou'd bind, or thoſe ſhou'd ſure be void;
Both muſt ſubſiſt, or both muſt be deſtroy'd.

The *Romans* diſcovered in the End how detrimental to Society this too great Extent of paternal Authority really proved; in conſequence of this, they reduced it into narrower Bounds, and took away the Power over Life and Death. Alas! how great

* Crebillon, *in his Tragedy of* Radamiſtus *and* Zenobia.

great the Folly, to permit ſo long that a whole Family ſhould be abandon'd to the Will of a ſingle Man, who too frequently made an ill Uſe of his Power?

In order to have a proper Idea of this wrong Uſe which Parents may make of a Right over the Lives of their Offspring, we need only re-call to our Memory that Cuſtom which prevail'd over the *Greeks*, of expoſing their Children. Where, in this Caſe, was that paternal Tenderneſs ſo boaſted of by the Lawyers? What Streſs can be laid on a Diſpoſition which we ſee may be ſo far diſpenſed with as to ſacrifice the Life of a poor Child, purely to gratify Avarice or Ambition, by affording a larger Portion to a Child already brought up? Do we not at this Day ſee among the *Nazarenes* many Examples of the Harſhneſs of Parents? How many hapleſs Daughters are ſacrificed in order to enrich an eldeſt Son? They are without Pity condemned to perpetual Impriſonment, and under the ſpecious Appellation of *Nun*, languiſh in Captivity during Life. Are not theſe, my Friend, moſt ſenſible Marks of paternal Tenderneſs? Can you, after this, think that the natural Affection of Men is a proper Foundation for Law, or that any Dependance can be had on that innate Tenderneſs which ſome Declaimers have magnified with all the Pomp of Eloquence.

I am confident, my dear *Jacob*, that a Law which ſhould place Children intirely in the power of their Fathers, would at leaſt be as unreaſonable as a Law which gave Children a Power over their Fathers. In a well-regulated State, the Power of the one, and the Obedience of the other, ought to be fixed. Even the moſt neceſſary Laws ought to have Limits. I am convinced that the Head of a Family ought to have all the Authority neceſſary to

inſpire with Virtue, and to regulate the Manners of his Deſcendants. But I can by no means agree, that if he ſhould forget to be a Father, he ſhould ſtill retain a Power of puniſhing a Number of innocent Perſons, to whom he imputes no Crime, but the natural Deſire of freeing themſelves from an inſupportable Yoke.

When one conſiders attentively the Reaſons which generally induce Parents to croſs the Inclinations of their Children in Marriage, one diſcovers their Source either in Caprice or in Ambition. I have ſhewn you, my Friend, that it is not juſt to ſubject many to the Fancy of one. I believe I have alſo offered you Reaſons ſufficient, to prove that Equality amongſt Citizens contributes to the Good of Society. If to theſe, you will add the Reflections of a Philoſopher, who not content with regarding all Mankind as Equals, ſets a greater Price on the Satisfaction of the Mind than on all the Treaſures of the Univerſe. All theſe things, I ſay, conſidered, I flatter my ſelf you will not perſiſt in cenſuring that Deciſion of the *Nazarene* Pontiffs, which ſolemnly declares, that Men have no Right to invalidate ſuch Marriages as are contracted with the free Conſent of both Parties.

Marriages founded in Affection are the moſt happy. Love, ſays an *Engliſh* Author *, ought to have ſhot its Roots deep, and to have been well grown, before we enter into that State. There is nothing which more nearly concerns the Peace of Mankind, than the having a thorough Knowledge of thoſe with whom they converſe. If this be ſo, how ſtrong a Reaſon is it for a Husband, being well acquainted with the Qualities of a Woman with whom he is to paſs the reſt of his Days? It is on his Choice in this reſpect, that his Happineſs or Miſery for Life depend.

* The Spectator.

pend. One may ſay of Marriage what *Virgil* ſaid of Hell;

With mighty eaſe, we downwards find the Way
To Hell; the Gates are open Night and Day:
But oh! how hard and difficult to tread
The Paths to heav'nly Light which upward lead?

But when once we are in, there is no Remedy left but Patience. How well ought we to examine an Action which hath ſuch important Conſequences, and how evidently unjuſt to deprive a Man of his Liberty in reſpect to a Thing which ſo nearly concerns him? When the Choice of a Husband or Wife is left to Parents, they have nothing in view but the Bleſſings and Advantages of this World; whereas the Perſons who are themſelves intereſted regard moſtly perſonal Merit. The firſt would procure all the Eaſe and Pleaſures of Life for the Perſon whoſe Intereſt they eſpouſe, in hopes that in all Situations theſe Advantages may be ſerviceable to them. The latter fix their Thoughts on a continual Bliſs.

You ſee, my Friend, the different Sentiments whereon the Fathers of Families and their Children act. I leave you to judge which is moſt reaſonable. To me it appears, that Satisfaction of Mind is of more Value than the Empire of the Univerſe, with reſpect to a Perſon who deſires to live happy and at Eaſe. The *Turks* have a much wiſer Maxim in this reſpect than the *French*. They permit their Children to chuſe, if they think fit, from among their Slaves; they regard not in their Alliances either Riches or Ambition, when Love ſtands in the Way. The *Jews*, on the contrary, reſemble the *Nazarenes*, who reject the Deciſion of their Pontiffs; they even go farther, for they ſettle the Fate of their Children in their Infancy. They contract them before

before they are at Years of Diſcretion; and I confeſs, I know not how it comes to paſs, that our Brethren are not more unlucky in their Marriages than we generally obſerve them to be.

A Father, who forms a Project of marrying his Son on the mere Score of Intereſt, can he poſſibly know any thing of the Humour or Character of her he deſigns for his Daughter-in-law, when perhaps he is ſcarce acquainted with her Perſon? In truth, my Friend, I cannot but blame theſe ſort of Bargains, believing that Affection, Tenderneſs and Sympathy are the proper Bands which tie in Marriage.

I obſerve in *France*, and in many other Countries, that a Peaſant is much happier than a Man of ſuperior Rank; becauſe the former may diſpoſe of his Heart as he pleaſes; but the latter being a Slave to Birth, muſt on that account ſtifle his Affection. The Examination of her Dignity muſt precede all reſpect for her good Qualities in the Woman to whom he inclines; and it muſt be his firſt Care not to derogate from his Nobility, in finding any thing amiable in a Perſon beneath him. So many Precautions muſt render a Man miſerable. It is natural to avoid Conſtraint; and therefore I have no Idea of an imaginary Advantage which deprives me of real ones.

Great Men have always elevated themſelves on this head above the Vulgar of their Rank. When they have found themſelves invaded by the Power of Love, they have not fail'd to marry as their Paſſion directed. They have never thought themſelves obliged to ſtoop to ridiculous Cuſtoms; but have raiſed to an Equality with themſelves, ſuch as Love told them were worthy of that Elevation. One of the firſt Monarchs of the World *, diſtinguiſh'd alike

* Peter Alexowitz, Czar *of* Moſcovy.

alike by the Extenſiveneſs of his Genius and his Dominions, gave a Place on his Throne to a Woman of the meaneſt Birth. His Glory was far from ſuffering any Diminution thereby; the World having admired his Capacity as a Prince, contemplated his Conduct with Pleaſure, as the Head of his Family, and found nothing inconſiſtent with that Grandeur he ſtood poſſeſſed of, conſidered in one Light, and the Tenderneſs with which he had acted in the other.

I have inſiſted long enough, dear *Brito*, on this Subject; I would by no means force you to adopt my Sentiments, if you judge them unreaſonable, but if what I have ſaid appears well founded, then I ſhall imagine I have not done amiſs in arguing againſt your Opinion. Till then I ſhall remain in a kind of Uncertainty. For tho' I can by no means approve placing a boundleſs Authority in Parents, yet I ſhall be very diffident as to my own Judgment, if I find that a Perſon endowed with ſo much Wit and good Senſe as you are, inclines to an oppoſite Way of thinking. There are none but Pedants, and the *Roman* Pontiffs, who pretend to Infallibity. Philoſophers and Men of Senſe are always afraid of falling into Errors. They are too well acquainted with the Weakneſs of human Underſtanding not to be apprehenſive of tripping ſometimes in ſpight of all their Care. Many have puſh'd their Modeſty too far, and have run into a kind of Pyrrhoniſm to expreſs their Humility. I cannot help thinking it a little extraordinary, that *Socrates* ſhould ſay after thirty Years Study, *That he knew only one thing, which was, that he knew nothing* *. Methinks it was a long time to meditate, in order to be the Author at laſt of ſuch a Saying.

May

* *Id unum ſcio, quod nihil ſcio.*

May you, dear *Brito*, live always contented and ſatisfied.

Hamburgh.

LETTER CXXVI.

ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, heretofore a Rabbi at* Conſtantinople, *to* AARON MONCECA.

THE Letter, my dear *Monceca*, which you wrote me on the different Sects of the *Nazarenes*, hath inclined me to reflect a little on thoſe which formerly divided the Religion of our Anceſtors. It ſeems to me that there is no Religion, which once thoroughly eſtabliſhed, does not, at the ſame time that it ſhoots its Roots downwards, demonſtrate its Strength alſo, by ſtriking out its Branches upwards. In the Beginning theſe Sects are but a kind of Sprigs or Suckers; by degrees they ſwell, and at length acquire a Bigneſs proportionable to the Trunk from whence they ſprung. As they grow and gather Strength, they digreſs farther and farther from the Doctrines of their Mother Church. The chief of each Sect forms his Syſtem but by little and little, and his Diſciples again add many things thereto.

It is always gradually, and ſtep by ſtep that Innovators condemn the received Religion. If they at once meddled with Fundamentals, they would fright rather than perſuade People. There is a Neceſſity of preparing them by ſmaller Alterations, for the Reception of Novelties of a larger Size.

The

The *Sadducees* at their firſt Appearance, went no further than the *Caraites* of our Days. They contented themſelves with rejecting the Traditions of the Ancients, and ſtuck cloſe to the written Law. The *Phariſees*, a ſort of Folks as fond heretofore of Chimæras as my *quondam* Brethren the Rabbins are at this Day, and zealous Maintainers of a thouſand ridiculous Traditions, were directly oppoſite to the *Sadducees*. However, thus far the latter were in the right, and admitted nothing but what was reaſonable. But quickly after, the Love of Novelty, and the Pleaſure of ſtraying in Paths far from thoſe of their Adverſaries, drew them into unſuſtainable Notions. Of *Caraites* they became Infidels and Blaſphemers, and thereby gave their Enemies the *Phariſees* as great Advantages over them as they themſelves were poſſeſſed of in the Beginning. They deny'd the Reſurrection of the Body and the Exiſtence of Angels; they maintained, that the Soul was mortal, and that there was no ſpiritual Being but God alone *. By this pernicious Syſtem, they opened a Door to all Sorts of Crimes, the Fear of Puniſhments, and the Hope of Rewards hereafter, being the Ties by which common People are bound to Virtue. It is true they did acknowledge God created the Univerſe, and that he governed it by his Providence; but then they were of Opinion, that he neither puniſhes nor rewards, ſave in this World only.

Let me intreat you, my Friend, to examine the ſeveral Sects now ſubſiſting among the *Nazarenes*, and you will find them come very near in their Sentiments to thoſe which were formerly among the *Jews*. The *Sadducees* in *Judea* were what the Deiſts now are at *Paris*, of whom you have written me

* Joſeph. Antiquitat. *lib.* xviii. cap. 2. & de Bello Judaico, lib. vi. cap. 12.

me ſo much formerly in your Letters, and their Belief, as you muſt obſerve, nearly the ſame *. I would not however, puſh this Parallel too far, becauſe I know that the true Deiſts, that is to ſay, ſuch as have a proper Veneration for the Divinity, do not reject the Doctrine of a future State †.

But let us purſue this Parallel between the *Jewiſh* and *Nazarene* Sects. That of the *Phariſees* ſtill ſubſiſts, and is indeed become the Standard of Belief among the modern *Jews*, if we except my Brethren the *Caraites*, and a few *Samaritans*; for I look upon all ſuch as profeſs themſelves Votaries to the *Talmud*, and the Traditions of the Rabbins as Deſcendants of the *Phariſees*. From the Deſtruction of the Temple this Sect hath ſwallowed up all the others. The *Jews* in general have unhappily received all its Reveries; ſo that a thouſand ridiculous Chimæras, under the Name of Traditions, have in a manner annull'd the Holy Scriptures.

I ſigh, dear *Monceca*, in the Bitterneſs of Soul, when I conſider, that except a ſmall Number of *Caraites*, all our Nation have embraced the groſſeſt Errors. Their Religion, as it now ſtands, is an Edifice built entirely on the Traditions of the *Phariſees*, and not at all on the Books of the Law. You are well enough acquainted with the Fierceneſs and Pride of thoſe ancient Doctors. They look'd upon themſelves as infinitely more holy than other People, and on this account ſeparated themſelves from thoſe whom they ſtiled Sinners or profane Perſons, with whom they would not ſo much as eat or drink. It was from hence that they derived their Name of *Phariſees*, which, as you know, comes from the word *Pharos*, which ſignifies to ſeparate. They carried, however, their Point by their Hypocriſy

* Tom. 1. Let. 4.

† See the Writings of the Baron of *Cherbury*.

pocriſy in deceiving the People, who are generally the Dupes of ſuch as put on an exterior Shew of Sanctity.

I find, my dear *Monceca*, a mighty ſtrong Reſemblance between the old *Phariſees* and the modern *Janſeniſts*, as you paint them out. Theſe laſt pique themſelves exactly like the firſt on their great Auſterity, and endeavour to diſtinguiſh themſelves by extraordinary, ſhall I call them, or their odd Actions. They have the ſame Veneration for their *Auſtin*, that the *Phariſees* have for their Traditions, or their Succeſſors the Rabbins have at this day for the *Talmud*. They are Cheats, Hypocrites, Impoſtors, and know perfectly well, eſpecially the Women amongſt them, how to deceive the Populace by a fair Outſide. They make a mighty Parade of the Severity of their Morals, which hinders not, however, their ſuppoſing the *Epines*, the *Hemorrhoiſes*, *She-Saints*, and the *Abbé Paris* a He-One. In one word, I find them but too like the *Phariſees*.

The *Eſſenes*, who among the ancient *Jews* were perhaps the only true Obſervers of the Law, had Opinions very different from thoſe of the other Sects. They led a Life far more rigid, but at the ſame time far more ſage than any of their Countrymen, but notwithſtanding this there was not a Spice of Hypocriſy in their Conduct. They were Men truly virtuous, whoſe Moderation and Self-denial muſt appear exemplary, even in the Eyes of Philoſophers. It is true they ran into ſome very odd Doctrines. They admitted abſolute Predeſtination, looked upon Man as a Slave, deny'd his Free-will, and left him no Liberty in his Actions. *They differed alſo from the* Phariſees *about the great Articles of a future State and the Reſurrection of the Dead. For tho' they believed the former, they deny'd the latter, maintaining, that Souls when they left their Bodies, entered*

entered inſtantly into a State of Immortality, remaining eternally happy or eternally miſerable, according to their Actions here, without ever being joined again to their own, or to any other Bodies *.

There are many *Nazarenes*, who maintain at this Day the laſt mentioned Opinions of the *Eſſenes*, and who believe there is no Purgatory, notwithſtanding what is ſaid on that Subject by other *Nazarenes*. They ſay, that when the Soul eſcapes from the Captivity it ſuffers in the Body, it enters into a State of eternal Happineſs or eternal Miſery. There are not a few who admit abſolute Predeſtination; and in ſhort, all who are call'd reformed throughout *Europe*, reſemble in many reſpects the *Eſſenes*.

There was yet another Sect among the *Jews*, who were ſtiled the *Contemplative* or *Therapeutæ* †. Thoſe who embraced their Opinions, ſaid, that it was a Motion of the divine Love which threw them into a ſort of Enthuſiaſm, not unlike that of the *Bacchantes* and the *Corybantes*, in their Celebration of their Myſteries among the ancient Pagans. This fit laſted till they fell into a kind of Contemplation, during which they were in an Ecſtacy. Thenceforward, they looked upon themſelves as raiſed above other Men. Theſe People often retired into Deſarts, leaving their Relations and Friends, in order to deliver themſelves up entirely to ſeraphick Joys.

It is eaſy to find theſe *Therapeutæ* among the Myſtics of our Days. The Monks, who leave the World and retire into Deſarts, that they may have nothing to diſturb them in their Contemplation, reſemble them ſtrongly. The Fanaticks, or the Enlightned, as they call themſelves, are alſo of this Caſt.

* *Prideaux*'s Connection.

† Philo de vitâ contemplativâ. p. 668. edit. Colon.

Caſt. They believe, as thoſe People did, that they have received the Spirit in a ſupernatural Way; that it entirely poſſeſſes them, that they are guided by it in all things, and conſequently juſtified by it.

You ſee, dear *Monceca*, that I had Reaſon to maintain there was ſcarce a *Nazarene* Sect, in which might not be diſcovered ſomewhat of the Leaven of ſome one of thoſe which anciently prevailed among the *Jews*. In this manner, the Opinions of Men ſucceed each other. After being proſcribed for a certain Space of time, they again revive, and find again new Partizans.

There was in *Judea*, a little before the Deſtruction of that Kingdom, a certain Sect who called themſelves *Herodians*, and who took riſe from *Herod* the *Great*. This Sect ſubſiſts at this Day in all Courts. The Errors of theſe conſiſts in following blindly the Will of their Prince, and in thinking that Party always in the right which has a ſuperior Force on its Side. *Herod* followed this Principle in his own Practice. *Joſephus* *, a celebrated Hiſtorian of our Nation, tho' too much deſpiſed by us, informs us, that this Prince, to make his Court to the *Romans*, did many things which were not only forbidden by, but were directly contrary to the Spirit of our Laws. Nay, he digreſſed ſo far from the right Road, as to build Temples and to erect Statues for Idolatrous Worſhip, which abominable Crimes he excuſed by the Obligation he lay under of keeping on good Terms with the *Romans*. His Followers adopted his Maxims; and the Courtiers, thoſe eternal Idolaters of a Monarch's Favour, were almoſt to a Man of this Sect; which was thoroughly deſpiſed by the more virtuous *Jews*, and is even now held in Abomination, notwithſtanding the Diſtance of Time, by all ſuch as have

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* Joſeph. Antiq. lib. xv. cap. 12.

a true Senſe of Religion; and prefer the Service of God to a vain and fleeting Glory. See, my Friend, how a *Nazarene* Author has treated theſe *Herodians*. "I believe they were like *Herod*, but half "*Jews*; Men who made Profeſſion indeed of that "Religion, but could, upon occaſion, accommo- "date themſelves to the Pagan Idolatry, and do "whatever was demanded of them. The *Saddu-* "*cees*, who believed there was no Life after this, "ran almoſt unanimouſly into that Opinion, in- "ſomuch that they came afterwards to be con- "founded with that Sect *."

One may, *Monceca*, boldly venture to affirm, that the Belief of the Prince determines that of his Courtiers in general, and influences in time that of his People. In effect, it is next to an Impoſſibility that the Religion of the Sovereign ſhould not in time deſtroy and abſorb the reſt. Would it not have been ſufficient to have turned all *France* Proteſtants if *Henry* IV. had continued in that Religion? Had it been ſo, I am perſuaded there would have been fewer Papiſts in *Paris*, than there are now of the Reformed. For it is impoſſible, that in the Courſe of four or five Generations, there ſhould not in every Family be a Chief, deſirous of Honours, Offices, and ſuch like Marks of Diſtinction. Ambition, in proportion, reigns equally among Great and Small. In order to make a Fortune eaſily, a Man muſt be of the Religion of his Prince. This is an excellent Reaſon in its favour, and an Argument very prevalent with the greateſt Part of Mankind.

In order to demonſtrate the Truth of this Fact, we need only conſider what is become of the Popiſh Religion in the North, and it will preſently convince us, that the Religion of the Prince will abſolutely,

* *Prideaux*'s Connection.

lutely, in time, ſwallow up the reſt: If the Succeſſors of *Herod* had all of them thought as he did, the *Jewiſh* Religion would ſoon have been half extinguiſh'd. The *Phariſees* themſelves would have gone over to his Sect; for they had too much Pride and Vanity not to deſire a Share in the Royal Favour. Thoſe who expreſs a great deal of Zeal for an Opinion, are not the leaſt likely to change it. I have ſeen many *Nazarenes* who have writ with much Heat in defence of a Doctrine which Intereſt or Honours hath afterwards tempted them to deſert; while ignorant People, and Men of a middling Capacity have ſuffered with invincible Conſtancy in defence of their Behaviour. It is not very difficult to gain the Doctors of the *Sorbonne*, in caſe it become neceſſary to eſtabliſh any new Opinion in *France*. By the means of Benefices, the Sovereign has in his hand the Keys of the Clergy's Hearts. If the *Janſeniſts* could obtain Preferments to the full Extent of their Deſires, they would certainly make leſs Noiſe than they do. But the *Moliniſts* take all, which will never bring both Parties to an Agreement.

May'ſt thou enjoy, dear *Monceca*, Health, Wealth and Proſperity.

Cairo.

LETTER

LETTER CXXVII.

JACOB BRITO, *to* AARON MONCECA.

THE Superſtition of the *Portugueſe*, my dear *Monceca*, puts me in mind of that ancient Severity with which our Forefathers kept the Sabbath. There was a Time when that Superſtition was puſh'd ſo far, that the *Jews*, by a falſe Delicacy of Conſcience durſt not defend their Lives upon that Day. If they were attack'd, they rather ſuffer'd themſelves to be ſlain than they would avoid it by Reſiſtance. In the Beginning of the Wars under the *Maccabees*, the Folly and Inconvenience of this Conduct became manifeſt by its miſchievous Conſequences. Men of Senſe, who ſaw clearly that the divine Law could not enjoin any thing apparently deſtructive of Society, decided, that the fourth Commandment did not forbid the defending of their Lives when they were attack'd, or found themſelves in Danger. In thus explaining the Commandment, they certainly came nearer to its true Senſe; but ſtill their Explication wanted Scope. For after all, they imagined that they were only to reſiſt in caſe of an Attack, and that even this Deciſion did not give them a Power of impeding any preparative Steps towards the Ruin of the Publick, or Deſtruction of any private Perſons; but only a Permiſſion to defend themſelves at the laſt Extremity. Thus it fell out, that if the *Jews* were attack'd upon the Sabbath day they made a vigorous Reſiſtance; but if they were beſieged in a Town,

Town, they did not think it lawful to hinder the raiſing of Mounts or of Batteries. They durſt not ſo much as make a Sally in order to drive the Enemy from an advantageous Poſt, becauſe in this Caſe they would have been Aggreſſors; and except in a Point of the laſt Extremity, they held it a Thing abſolutely unlawful to oppoſe Force by Force.

It was this falſe Delicacy, in a great Meaſure, which gave *Pompey* an Opportunity of taking the Temple. He ſoon perceiv'd the Nature of the *Jewiſh* Diſcipline, and inſtead of making Attacks on the Sabbath Days, he employed them entirely in perfecting his Works, in raiſing Batteries, filling up Ditches and erecting Machines; from which Change of Conduct he found all the good Effects he could deſire. His Soldiers did their Buſineſs ſo well and ſo commodiouſly, that at length they ſapp'd a great Tower, which falling, drew after it a conſiderable Part of the Wall. The Breach thus made, they mounted and carried the Place by Aſſault. Thus the Temple was taken and ſack'd through the blind Superſtition of thoſe who ſhould have defended it.

Whatever our Rabbins may ſay, my dear *Monceca*, I ſhall never be brought to believe, that the Divinity can expect from Men a Compliance with a Law, hurtful or prejudicial to Society. The Light of Nature ſhews us, that the Deity intends the Happineſs of Mankind, and that the Rules he has given us for our Conduct have all that Tendency. We ought therefore to reject in the Celebration of the Sabbath, whatever may render it hurtful; and ſince from the Time of the *Maccabees* it has been admitted, that Reſiſtance in Caſes of extreme Neceſſity is lawful, we ought likewiſe to conclude, that we are permitted to do any thing which may be

needful on that Day to prevent the Snares laid by our Enemies from taking Effect.

The *Nazarenes* act, in this reſpect, more wiſely than the *Jews*. They have their Sabbath Day as well as we, but they don't obſerve that Day in ſuch a Manner as to render it hurtful. They do not apprehend that the Service of God obliges them to permit, by a blameable Indolence, the Deſtruction of his Temple and Altars. The *Nazarenes* ſay likewiſe, that in certain Laws the Letter kills, but the Spirit giveth Life; and that they are always to be explain'd in ſuch a rational manner, as that the Divine Commands may coincide with the Meaſures requiſite for the publick Good. Neceſſity may diſpenſe with many things. It were to be wiſh'd that our Anceſtors had thought as reaſonably on the Head of the Sabbath, as our Brethren do in the Country where I live. They are not circumciſed, they eat Pork, go to the *Nazarene* Churches, ſing Veſpers, and if it be neceſſary, ſay Maſs; yet remain nevertheleſs good *Jews* in their Hearts. Of what Uſe would a falſe and fooliſh Zeal be, which would ſerve only to ruin entirely the Remains of our unfortunate Nation in theſe Parts? I heartily diſapprove a fierce and haughty Behaviour on certain Occaſions. It is more allowable to be a little negligent, or even to be wanting to our Duty with reſpect to one Precept, than to hazard an Inability of fulfilling the reſt.

It is not becauſe I have not a proper Admiration of that Conſtancy which appeared in the Behaviour of our Anceſtors that I reaſon thus; I own I am ſtruck with it: But what then? I cannot approve of it. What Mortal Man but muſt be aſtoniſhed, when he conſiders their Firmneſs? *Joſephus* and other Hiſtorians have preſerved a full Account thereof, and tranſmitted it to Poſterity. The *Nazarene* Authors do them all imaginable Juſtice. See how

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an *Engliſh* Writer ſpeaks of the Conduct of our Forefathers at the time *Pompey* ſack'd the Temple. "During all this Diſtreſs, ſays he, amidſt the Cries "and the Diſorders naturally attending theſe Barbarities, the Prieſts ſtill continued in the Temple, "and ſtill diſcharged the Duties of their Functions; "they perſiſted in them with wonderful Calmneſs "and Steddineſs of Mind, notwithſtanding the "Rage of their Enemies, and notwithſtanding the "Anguiſh of Soul they muſt feel at ſeeing their "Relations and Friends die before their Eyes, "chuſing to fall by the Swords of their Enemies, who were now Maſters of all, rather than "abandon the Service of their God. Many of "them went to mingle their Blood with that of "the Sacrifices which they offered, and by the "Sword of the Heathens became Victims to their "Duty. *Pompey* himſelf could not help admiring "this Firmneſs, this Conſtancy, to which ſcarce "any Parallel can be found *."

Whatever Contempt other Nations may have for ours, I believe, I may affirm, my Friend, without Breach of Truth, that never any People gave more convincing Marks of Bravery than we have done in fighting againſt our Enemies, or have ſhewn greater Veneration for the Deity. It is true that we have ſometimes fail'd; but who are they to whom the ſame Objection may not be made? For a Nation never to be deficient in any Point of Duty, we muſt ſuppoſe it compoſed of Men void of human Frailty. Where are they to be met with who have reſiſted ſuch Perſecutions as we have felt, without ſinking under the Weight of their Misfortunes? We however remain uncruſh'd. We have ſuſtain'd with a Patience worthy of the greateſt Admiration, all the Puniſhments that have been inflicted upon

* *Prideaux*'s Connection.

us. We are, as it were, Vagabonds throughout the Earth, proſcribed in many Parts of the World, and forced to pay for the very Air we breathe, in Places which afford us a Retreat: Evils, capable of deſtroying even the Conſtancy of a Stoick. Yet in the midſt of theſe Diſtreſſes, ſcarce one in an Age can be found amongſt us who abandons his Belief and proves a Traitor to his God.

The *Nazarenes*, who blame without diſtinction all our Actions, even ſuch as deſerve the higheſt Commendation, give the Name of Wrongheadedneſs to our Conſtancy, inſtead of doing Juſtice to our Firmneſs. Their Hatred towards us, makes them ſo blind that they make Crimes even of our Virtues. I ſhould be glad if they would inform me, how that which in themſelves they ſtile Grandeur of Soul and Fidelity to Providence, comes to be in us Obſtinacy and Hardneſs of Heart? Inaſmuch as we are thoroughly perſuaded of the Truth of our Religion, and believe as firmly as they do, why are we more wrongheaded than they? Obſtinacy is that Vice which engages a Man to defend his Opinion, even after he is convinced of its Falſhood. But there can be nothing more unworthy of an honeſt Man than to change his Sentiments in religious Matters, purely out of Complaiſance. It is becoming like certain Idolaters in the *Indies*, who make a Trade of their Religion in their Negotiations with the *Nazarene* Miſſionaries; they abandon the Worſhip of their Idols while the Fathers furniſh them with a better Subſiſtance than otherwiſe they could obtain; but whenever they are turn'd out of their Pay, away they run to their Woods, and to their falſe Gods again.

Conſider, my dear *Monceca*, the ſeveral Sects of the *Nazarènes*, which have ſprung up in the Space of ſeventeen hundred Years, they are almoſt all extinct.

tinct. One Age hath ſeen a Religion riſe and fall, which yet in its Day had a Multitude of Partizans. In this ſpringing and decaying of Religions, ours hath ſuffered no Diminution. I am perſuaded there are at this Day as many *Jews* ſcattered over the Earth as there were in the World at the time of the laſt Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* by the *Romans*. It ſeems that Heaven is alike employ'd in multiplying them and their Misfortunes. If all the *Jews* who are in the Countries of the Great *Mogul*, in *Moſcovy*, in *Turky*, in *Africa*, and in the ſeveral Kingdoms of *Europe*, were aſſembled in one Country, I doubt whether there would be a more numerous or a more puiſſant Nation in the Earth. This ſhall one Day happen, dear *Monceca*, when the long Captivity under which we now languiſh, ſhall have its final Period. The Walls of *Jeruſalem* ſhall be rebuilt by her Children, the Holy Temple again reſtored, and the Almighty worſhipped therein by his faithful *Iſraelites*, in the ſame manner as heretofore. Let the *Nazarenes* then go on to boaſt their own Proſperity, and to upbraid us with our Misfortunes. He who hath brought us into this Slavery, and hath made us ſtoop to the Yoke of theſe Nations, can deliver us when he pleaſes, and when our Crimes ſhall be expiated, then the *Nazarenes* ſhall begin to feel the Puniſhment of theirs.

We may apply to our Enemies what an *Engliſh* Governor once ſaid to a *French* General when *England* was deprived of *Calais*, the laſt of the numerous Conqueſts it had made in *France*. The General ask'd the Governor pleaſantly, *When do you think you ſhall paſs the Water, and eſtabliſh yourſelves again here? That we ſhall do*, replied the Governor gravely, *whenever your Sins are greater than ours*. If this Gentleman was right in his Conjecture, then towards the latter End of the Reign of *Lewis* XIV.

the *French* were greater Sinners than the *Engliſh*. It is true that Heaven at laſt pardon'd them, and their Enemies quickly paſs'd the Sea again. It ſhall be, dear *Monceca*, with the *Jews* as with the *Nazarenes*; whenever they become virtuous, God will put an end to their Sufferings. All the different Captivities that we have endured are but the Effects of our Vices, and as theſe have not produced an Amendment, God hath thought fit to continue our Afflictions, that he may change intirely our evil Inclinations, and render us worthy of being call'd by his Name. The longer our Slavery laſts, the more agreeable its End will be. In vain have the Nations conſpired the Ruin of *Iſrael*; their Projects ſhall be all diſappointed; the Almighty ſhall diſſipate their dark Contrivances as the Wind drives Smoke away. When our Deliverer ſhall come to break our Chains, the Earth ſhall tremble at his Preſence, and Kings ſhall fall down at his Feet; he ſhall overcome all Obſtacles, and *Sion* ſhall be reſtored, and become more flouriſhing than of old. Happy! Happy! *Monceca*, ſhall the *Jews* be who ſhall then enjoy the Light of the Sun; they ſhall ſee in one Day more Miracles done than have been hitherto wrought from the Creation of the World. They ſhall contemplate the Face of the moſt auguſt *Meſſiah*, reſplendent with Glory. Perhaps that Day is nearer than we imagine. The Deliverer of *Iſrael* may appear in an Inſtant; it is alſo poſſible that happy Moment may be far off. God alone knows when it ſhall come to paſs. Let us ſubmit with all due reſpect to his Decrees. Let us adore his holy Providence, and let us be aſſured, that if he puniſhes us it is for our Good, and that in the End he may bring us to Glory.

May'ſt thou enjoy thy Health, dear *Monceca*, live

live happily and content, and may the God of our Fathers grant thee Proſperity in all things.

Lisbon.

LETTER CXXVIII.

AARON MONCECA, *to* JACOB BRITO.

I HAVE many times conſidered what it was, which could render ſome Nations ſo much more affable than others. I am at length perſuaded, that it is ſimply Education; and that it is purely the Inſtructions we give Children in their tender Years, which determines their future Temperament, and inſpires them with that Politeneſs which is of ſo great conſequence to Society.

Some Authors, moderately furniſh'd with Underſtanding, have maintain'd, that thoſe are the moſt poliſh'd who dwell in Countries ſubject to abſolute Monarchs *. If we may credit theſe Men, Brutality is a kind of neceſſary Conſequence of Liberty. They compare the Politeneſs of the *French* with that Quickneſs and Haughtineſs viſible in the *Engliſh*, and that plain natural Behaviour, which is the Characteriſtick of the *Dutch* and *Swiſs*. But the Examples theſe Authors make uſe of, in order to ſuſtain their Opinions, are abſolutely deſtroy'd by others; which very plainly prove, that the Liberty of a Nation does not at all prejudice Affability, or Complaiſance. The *Greeks* and *Romans*, while their ſeveral Republicks were

* *See, amongſt other things,* Lettres ſur les Hollandois, *ſaid to be written by Mr.* Muralt.

in the greateſt Splendor, were the People in the World the moſt civilized, the moſt polite; while the *Perſians* and the *Parthians*, Slaves to abſolute Princes, were conſidered as Barbarians.

If we compare the Affability of the *Venetians* with the unmannerly Behaviour of the *Turks*, we ſhall readily agree, that deſpotick Government is far enough from inſpiring Politeneſs; we muſt look therefore for this Cauſe ſomewhere elſe, than in either Submiſſion or Liberty. For as we ſee, that ſome free People have little Complaiſance, and that under deſpotick Governments there may be found ſome who have leſs; and as it is certain, that the *Muſcovites* were heretofore the moſt reſtiff and the moſt brutal of all People, at the very time that they were abſolutely Slaves; we muſt acknowledge that the Idea we are apt to form of a Ferocity ariſing from a Spirit of Liberty, is not at all founded in Reaſon, but in Prejudice: wherefore we ought to continue our Search.

I think, and that with reaſon, dear *Brito*, that Education is the ruling Motive in moſt of the Actions of Mankind; they have been more or leſs tractable, according as they have been more or leſs cultivated in their Youth. When they have been taught early to render themſelves ſociable, to bend their Tempers, and to accommodate their Wills to thoſe of others, it grows into a Cuſtom, and they become inſenſibly complaiſant without thinking of being ſo. In ſhort, Habit is to them a ſecond Nature. But, when on the contrary, they are brought up in a full Gratification of their Paſſions, and allowed to follow blindly their own Humours, their Temper becomes more and more reſtive, and they grow the more and more impertinent as they grow in Years; the Nature of the Government they

they live under, neither abating nor encreaſing the Ruſticity of their Manners.

The *Muſcovites* are not become more ſubmiſſive within theſe twenty Years, and they are become more polite. *Peter Alexowitz* found the Secret of poliſhing their Manners and aboliſhing their ill Cuſtoms, without making them Slaves. He made them more ſociable, by obliging them to educate their Children in a proper manner. The *Muſcovite* Court differs as much from what it was twenty Years ago, as the Court of *France* differs from that of *Conſtantinople*; and yet I look upon theſe Courts as Antipodes to each other in this reſpect.

The *Muſcovites* were heretofore leſs poliſh'd and leſs affable than the *Turks*, abſolutely ignorant of the Laws of Civility, and very moderately ſkill'd in thoſe of Nations. The Character of Ambaſſador was ſcarce enough conſidered amongſt them to preſerve him who bore it from Indignities. *Wicquefort*, in his Treatiſe of the Ambaſſador and his Functions, ſpeaks of them in theſe terms:

" The *Muſcovites* are void of good Manners, " barbarous and brutal; and tho' Birth makes " ſome diſtinction between the better and the " meaneſt Sort of them, yet are they all Slaves " to the Czar, and through a baſe and ſervile E- " ducation one ſees nothing amongſt them, which " is not low, ſtupid and clowniſh. The Czar, " or Grand Duke, takes upon himſelf the Expen- " ces of all Ambaſſadors, as ſoon as they enter " his Dominions, and continues to defray them ſo " long as they remain in them; but then this " Kindneſs, Honour, or whatever you will call it, " is accompany'd with a kind of beaſtly " Arrogance. For, whereas in all other Courts " the Maſter of the Ceremonies, or Intro- " ductor of Ambaſſadors, does all Civilities

" to publick Miniſters, and gives them the Place " of Honour in their Houſes, in the Name of " his Maſter; the *Muſcovite* Priſtave does his ut- " moſt to make himſelf Maſter of that Place, " avoids lighting from his Horſe till the Miniſter " is actually diſmounted, throws himſelf firſt " into a Coach or into a Sledge; and, in ſhort, " behaves with the utmoſt Saucineſs upon all oc- " caſions. There are ſeveral Deſcriptions of this " Court, and its Formalities. Amongſt others, a " moſt impertinent one in the Account of the " Embaſſy ſent by the Duke of *Holſtein Gottorp* " thither, and into *Perſia* in the Year 1633. " But I do not remember any, in which this " Nation is ſet in a better light, than in that " which we have of the Earl of *Carliſle*, who " went thither on the part of the King of *Great* " *Britain*, in the ſame Year.

" The Priſtave, who received him at *Archangel*, " took the hand of the Ambaſſador, and would " not yield up that Point, till the Governor of " the Town directed him to comply with the " Earl's Deſire; who was a Man of Spirit, and " would not ſuffer any Injury to be done to the " King his Maſter. They fixed the Day on " which he was to make his Entry into *Moſcow*. " He was on horſeback, and after he had rode " above half a League, they told him it muſt be " put off until the next Day, and obliged him to " take up his Lodgings in a pitiful Village. The " Ambaſſador ſhewed not a little Reſentment, he " even wrote to the Czar upon it in very ſtrong " terms: But this ſignified nothing, they gave " him no Satisfaction, either on this Account, or " on the Errand on which he came. Nay, on a " certain Occaſion in which they ought to have " done him the higheſt Honours, they took an

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" opportunity to offer him the moſt outrageous
" Inſult. The Czar invited him to Dinner, but
" cauſed him to be placed at a ſeparate Table, at
" a greater diſtance from his own than that at
" which his *Bojars* ſate, who are in fact his Slaves,
" who were placed on the right hand, while the
" Ambaſſador ſate on the left. At length he
" took his leave, ſo little ſatisfy'd with the Court,
" that he refuſed the Preſents which were offered
" him, and expreſs'd his Reſentment in ſuch
" terms, that the Czar ſent an expreſs Embaſſy
" to complain of him to the King his Maſter *."

Tho' this Paſſage is ſomewhat long, yet am I perſuaded, my dear *Brito*, you will not find it tedious. It proves indubitably, that the moſt ſubmiſſive People in the World, may be at the ſame time exceeding brutal; and it gives us likewiſe a very juſt Idea of the Manners and Cuſtoms of the *Muſcovites*. It is true, that within theſe few Years great Changes have been made amongſt them; but after all, there are many things in their Manners that want Correction, and to Time it muſt be left to compleat what *Peter Alexowitz* has begun. After all, to him will be owing the total Change of a People ſo ſavage and ſo defective in point of Civility.

I have been inform'd by the Chevalier *Maiſin*, when I was at *Paris*, that he went often to the Inn at *Toulon*, where the young *Muſcovites* boarded, whom the Czar ſent thither to learn the Arts of Navigation and Ship-building; they ſerved at that time in the Marines. When they firſt came to that Place, there was hardly a Day paſt over their heads but they boxed, and were ſometimes ready to draw their Knives about who ſhould have the firſt

* Wicquefort de l'Ambaſſadeur, lib. 1. §. xviii. p. 476.

firſt Cut of the Meat. They look'd more like Bears Whelps half lick'd, than Men. However, by degrees they loſt all their ill Habits, and returned into their own Countries as poliſhed and as well bred, as if they had been born in the heart of *Europe*.

The Strangers who have gone over into *Muſcovy*, have done infinite Service in that Country. Beſides propagating the Arts, they have ſhewn the People the Abſurdity of their old Cuſtoms. I look upon the *French* and *Germans* ſettled there, as ſo many Miſſionaries employed in teaching them Humanity; and who do infinitely greater Service, than thoſe do who run to the *Eaſt* and *Weſt-Indies*, meerly to extend the Power of the Pope. The firſt Duty of Men, next to that of worſhipping the Deity, is miniſtring to the Wants of their Fellow-Creatures. He muſt have very little Charity in his Nature, who does not rejoice at hearing of a whole Nation being brought to their Senſes. Tho' I am a *Jew*, I take part in the good Fortune of Mankind; and when I underſtand, that a Man travels to augment it; I look upon him as an Hero. The World is the Country of a Philoſopher, he ought to be aſhamed of that mean and baſe Jealouſy, which conſtitutes what is called National Prejudice. I wiſh with all my heart, that the *Swiſs* Frankneſs, the good Senſe of the *Dutch*, *French* Wit, and *Engliſh* Penetration, were diffuſed through the whole human Species; they would not indeed after all this be *Jews*, but they would be worthy of becoming ſuch, and I ſhould willingly acknowledge them my Brethren. You ſee, my dear *Brito*, my Sentiments, with reſpect to the Maſs of Mankind. I don't know whether you will approve them; but I fancy you

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are ſo much above all Prejudice, that you cannot but love Virtue wherever it appears.

I go from hence the firſt of next Month, in order to paſs ſome time in *England*. I have already written to *Jeremy Coſta*, to hire for me an Apartment in ſome quiet Part of the City. It has been always my care throughout my Travels, to lodge in Places where, when I thought proper, I might indulge Meditation, without Danger of being diſturbed. In all great Cities, and eſpecially in *Paris* and *London*, a Man who applies himſelf to Study, ought to be as careful in his Choice of a Lodging, as a Man about to marry is in that of his Wife; and for the ſame reaſon, his Tranquility depending on his Choice. It is true, that in *France* or in *England*, one may eaſier change one's Houſe than one's Wife; but after all, when one is once fixed, removing is very troubleſome.

I muſt acknowledge to you, my Friend, that Change is troubleſome to me in all things. I maintain a perfect Uniformity in my Conduct, and my Manner of Life is entirely oppoſite to that of ſome other Perſons, who paſs their days in a ſort of continued Agitation. I have often pitied at *Paris* a Number of *French* People who were everlaſtingly in a hurry, and who ſeemed to me as uneaſy as if they had been in a Place beſieged.

To ſay the Truth, an Itch of Change, and a Paſſion for Novelty, are not unlike Poſſeſſions; I mean thoſe, which the Vulgar apprehend come from the Devil. There are more philoſophical Reaſonings neceſſary to cure a Brain thus turned, than Drops of holy Water to a *Nazarene* Prieſt, who would drive *Aſhtaroth* or *Belial* out of a Body, in which they lay in Gariſon. After all, it frequently happens, that philoſophical Arguments do no more good in one caſe, than eccleſiaſtical Ceremonies

remonies in the other; ſo that both Maladies remain incurable. This Caſe is common at *Paris*, where one half of the Smarts are as thoroughly fix'd to their Follies, as the Convulſioniſts are to their Diſeaſes. You will be aſtoniſh'd, my dear *Brito*, at ſeeing me treat theſe People like Demoniacks; but to ſpeak ſincerely, I don't know what elſe to call them. What Name can one give to a Sett of People, who commit all Sorts of Extravagances with an air of Myſtery. You will ſay perhaps that if the thing be ſo, I call thoſe Demoniacks who ought to be called Cheats and Impoſtors. It may be ſo. I leave it entirely to you to decide that Queſtion.

May God grant you, dear *Brito*, Health, Content and Happineſs.

Hamburgh.

LETTER CXXIX.

AARON MONCECA *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

THERE is nothing more diſputed, than that Preference which ought to be given to the Memory of ſovereign Princes diſtinguiſhed by their Virtues; and it ſeems a thing not yet decided whoſe Name ſhould ſtand firſt in this Liſt. For my part, dear *Iſaac*, I know none ſo worthy of that Poſt of Honour, as *Henry* IV. King of *France*. All the other Princes, of whom Men talk ſo much, if they had many good Qualities, have alſo had many

many bad ones; and there is not one amongſt them who has not tarniſh'd the Luſtre of his Virtues, not only by a light Fault, but by ſome conſiderable Exceſs, incompatible with Humanity and the Character of a Man of Worth. You may not perhaps have reflected thoroughly upon this Subject, I will therefore give you evident Proofs in Support of my Opinion, by running over all the Heroes of Antiquity, glancing alſo a little on the Moderns.

If we go as high as the fabulous Times and the Siege of *Troy*, and take upon us to examine the Heroes of *Homer*, we ſhall find them a Company of hair-brain'd, proud, cunning, or perjured Perſons. *Achilles* is a head-ſtrong Creature, who ſuffers half the *Greeks* to be knock'd o'the Head to no purpoſe; ſo great a Brute that he outrages the Corpſe of *Hector*, whoſe Valour he ought to have honour'd: None but mean and baſe Minds inſult over a vanquiſh'd Enemy. *Agamemnon* was the Hangman of his Family, he ſacrificed his Daughter to his own Ambition. *Ajax* is a Madman, *Ulyſſes* a Cheat, *Telemenes* the Murderer of his Son. In ſhort, without doing the leaſt Injury to theſe ancient Heroes, we may ſafely ſay, that the very beſt of them could not be ſtiled a Man of Probity.

But, without dwelling upon theſe times of Fiction, let us look a little into the Conduct of the greateſt Monarchs in the Univerſe. What Crimes did not *Alexander the Great* commit in the laſt Years of his Life? What is there groſs or abominable, into which he did not run? He butcher'd his Friends with his own hand, he cauſed his beſt Captains to be put to death, he gave himſelf up to Drinking and Debauchery; and many a Man has been broke upon the Wheel, for a leſs horrid Murder than that of *Clytus*. I do not know, whether I ought to put *Marius* and *Sylla* into the Rank

Rank of Sovereigns; but this I know, that while they were at the Head of the *Roman* Republick, they committed more Villainies, Robberies and Murders, than were ever perpetrated by the *Miquelets* in *Catalonia*, or the *Camiſars* in *France*.

Pompey and *Cæſar* were two illuſtrious Highwaymen, who diſputed for a long time which ſhould have the Honour of robbing his Country. Both abuſed the Powers granted them by the Republick, and whatever pompous Titles their Partizans might give them, it is impoſſible for us to conſider them in any other light than as Deſtroyers of their Country. The one thought of enſlaving it, under the Pretence of defending it; the other pretended a Right to it, in revenge for the Injuries done him.

Antony, *Auguſtus* and *Lepidus*, made the Earth and the Sea bluſh, by their bloody Proſcriptions. I look upon them as three Knights of the Road, who, on the Death of their Captain, ſhared his Booty among them, and a little after fell to quarrelling amongſt themſelves. It is true, that *Auguſtus* in the latter Part of his Life behaved well; but had he been a private Man he would have been hang'd many a fair Day, before his Penitence appear'd. The *Nazarenes* have a Proverb, *When the Devil grew old, he turn'd Hermit.* This was his Character to a hair.

Let us now quit the Heroes of Antiquity, and come to thoſe of later times; among whom, I own we ſhall find Men of greater Worth; but none of them without their Faults, and thoſe very conſiderable ones too.

Francis, the firſt King of *France*, had a thouſand Virtues. He was good, generous, ſincere; but with all theſe good Qualities he was certainly falſe to

to his Word, after he was delivered from his Captivity in *Spain*, and paid for that time the Emperor *Charles* Vth in the Coin which he had more than once received. That great Emperor, with all his Virtues, could not boaſt of much Sincerity, and his greateſt Admirers muſt allow this conſiderable Deficiency.

Times within our Memory have produced four Heroes of different Virtues, all of them endowed with great good Qualities, which each of them fullied by ſome notable Defects.

The firſt of theſe Heroes is *William* the Third, King of *Great-Britain*, who had without doubt very ſhining Properties, which would have appeared however brighter in the eyes of Poſterity, and have been more conſidered by Men of true good Senſe, if he had never contributed to the dethroning his Father-in-Law. What does the World ſay of a Man who lays his Hands on his Father's Goods, and obliges him to run about in a miſerable manner, begging his Bread?

Lewis the XIVth, is the ſecond of theſe Heroes. He was good-natur'd, magnificent, hated Cruelty, loved learned Men, and encouraged the Arts and Sciences, ſo as to render them flouriſhing in his Dominions. His Enemies continually objected his exorbitant Ambition; and yet it is not difficult to juſtify him upon that head, at leaſt to excuſe him. He had good Reaſons for puniſhing the *Spaniards*, who, for a long ſeries of time, had endeavour'd the Deſtruction of *France*. If he aggrandized his Kingdom, nothing can be plainer, than that in augmenting his proper Glory, he augmented alſo the Good of his People. His Ambition and his Conqueſts therefore, may be well enough approved. In ſhort, he had equal'd *Henry* IVth, had he never taken the Advice of the Jeſuits,

ſuits, or ſet his Eyes on Madam *Monteſpan*. To take a Woman away from her Husband, and to be ſo far governed by Prieſts, as to drive out of his Dominions by their Advice People to whom the Houſe of *Bourbon* had infinite Obligations, render'd it neceſſary for *Lewis* the XIVth, to have all the great Qualities he ſtood poſſeſſed of, from preventing his Fame from being utterly deſtroy'd by thoſe two moſt remarkable Slips in his Conduct.

I know very well, my dear *Iſaac*, that the Politicians excuſe the Baniſhment of the Reformed, by the Neceſſity there was of having but one Religion in *France*, in order to eſtabliſh its Tranquility on a firm Baſis. I muſt own, that theſe Reaſons have a great deal of weight. However, in exiling the Proteſtants, there was no neceſſity of having recourſe to as many Murders and Proſcriptions, as ever render'd a Triumvirate infamous. I own too, that it is ſaid, that *Lewis* the XIVth was totally ignorant of all theſe Cruelties; and that being as he was of a humane Diſpoſition, he would undoubtedly have hinder'd, had he known any thing of the matter. But, granting this, he was ſtill reſponſible; becauſe he was ſo weak as to give himſelf up to the pernicious Counſels of Monks and Devotees.

The Character of the late Czar *Peter* the Firſt, is, properly ſpeaking, a Mixture of Magnanimity and Cruelty, of Virtues and Vices. Let the World ſay what they will of his Glory, I ſhall never be brought to believe, that his intractable Fierceneſs was a Virtue, or that a Father ought to reckon among his illuſtrious Actions the Death of his Son.

Charles the XIIth of *Sweden*, had a ſurpriſing Courage, and with it a Multitude of other great great Qualities; but he puſh'd his Revenge to Extremity;

Extremity; and perhaps God himſelf, by that Chain of Evils which follow'd after the Battle of *Pultowa*, puniſh'd in this World his Cruelty towards *Patkul*, which was the more inexcuſable, conſidering the Character with which he was cloathed.

All theſe Heroes of whom I have been ſpeaking, and whoſe Characters I have ventured to examine, muſt be at leaſt allowed to have tarniſhed the Luſtre of their Virtues, by capital Errors. *Henry* IVth had no Failings, but ſuch as are incident to human Nature. He vanquiſh'd his Enemies, and as ſoon as he had done ſo, he generouſly forgave them whatever they had done amiſs. He conquer'd himſelf his own Kingdom, and made War only to recover what was juſtly his Due, and to drive out thoſe Enemies who came to attack him in his own Dominions, and to foment Troubles and Diviſions among his Subjects. He was the Father of his People; the Widow and the Orphan always found an Azylum at the Foot of his Throne. He loved Women, but not like *Lewis* the XIVth. He was in that ſo good and ſo perfect, that if in the times of Idolatry, when illuſtrious Princes were ranked amongſt the Gods, he had been there placed, I believe I ſhould have wanted an extraordinary Meaſure of divine Grace, to hinder me from entring the Temple of *Henry* IV, and burning Incenſe on his Altar.

France is at this Day governed by a Prince, who may perhaps one day rival the greateſt King of his Race. He has already ſhewn us Good-Nature, Generoſity, Clemency and Diſcretion, almoſt beyond compariſon; ſo many good Qualities ought ſurely to be conſidered as an earneſt, that other Virtues ſhall appear when Occaſion calls them forth.

The

The *Nazarenes* have a cuſtom of praying devoutly in their Churches for the Safety of their King. They intreat Providence daily to preſerve him and render him proſperous. Who could have imagined, all this conſidered, that the beſt King in the World ſhould be aſſaſſinated in the midſt of his People, to whom he was a common Parent? O ſtrange! O hapleſs Inſtance of the Folly and Frenzies of Men! *Lewis* the XIth met with few Rebels amongſt his Subjects. *Henry* IVth found amongſt them Enemies the moſt cruel.

The beſt Kings have ſeldom met with proper Returns from their People. It ſeems as if Severity was the ſole Method whereby Fear and Reverence can be impreſſed on the Croud; mean and ſervile Creatures, whom only a rigid and inflexible Adminiſtration can govern. The Kindneſs and Clemency of the preſent King of *France*, hath ſerved but to increaſe the Fierceneſs of the *Moliniſts*, and the Malignity of the *Janſeniſts*. Confident of Impunity, they have from time to time committed the moſt unpardonable Offences.

It is not long ſince a Prelate, whoſe Name is *Leſiteau* *, who had been a Jeſuit before his Promotion to that Rank, compos'd a Book, intitled, *An Anſwer to the Anecdotes on the Conſtitution Unigenitus*. In this Piece, in refuting the Sentiments of the *Janſeniſts*, he has run into the moſt outrageous Invectives againſt Perſons the moſt venerable; and not contented even with this, hath treated very unadviſedly of the Rights and Privileges of the Kingdom. The King was content with ſimply condemning the Books, forbidding the Sale thereof; and directing that all who were poſſeſſed of Copies, ſhould bring them to Perſons who were appointed to that end, by an Arret of Council. Without queſtion,

* Biſhop of *Siſteron*.

queſtion, my Friend, you apprehend that the Prelate, ſtruck with the Kindneſs and Clemency of his Prince, hath ever ſince behaved with more Caution. Nothing like it. Some Months after the Condemnation of his Work, he publiſhed a Sequel, written in the very ſame Spirit; this was again condemned by another Arret of Council. Maugre all this, our Prelate is again at work, and will, in all Probability, publiſh another Volume by way of Continuation to the Anecdotes.

To ſay the Truth, dear *Iſaac*, Subjects are ſometimes apt to abuſe the Good-nature and Compaſſion of their Princes. There is not, in my Opinion, any Boldneſs equal to that of ſome Eccleſiaſticks. They will ſometimes undertake the moſt extravagant Things. That Conſideration, which they think is due to their Character, gives them Spirit enough to undertake any Thing, inſomuch that they execute with Aſſurance what other People would not ſo much as ſuffer to enter into their Heads. One may ſafely ſay, my Friend, that in all Religions the greateſt Happineſs which can poſſibly attend the Society, is to have Men of Wiſdom and of peaceable Diſpoſitions for their Prieſts. Eccleſiaſticks are in States what Emeticks are in Medicine. Nothing more uſeful when apply'd properly, nothing ſo dangerous when adminiſtred *mal-a-propos*. A Prelate of Probity, an honeſt Parſon, a prudent Miniſter of any Church, a virtuous Rabbi are ineſtimable Treaſures. But what Miſchiefs do they occaſion when theſe People give themſelves up to work evil?

May'ſt thou dear *Iſaac*, enjoy Content, Happineſs and Satisfaction, as long as thou enjoyeſt Life.

Hamburgh.

P. S. It is proper that I ſhould take notice here of a Thing which will be thought ridiculous by ſuch only as know not the mighty Impreſſion which the Actions of truly great Men ſtamp on Hearts ſincerely addicted to Virtue. I have twenty times, when paſſing the *Pont-neuf* at *Paris* in the Night, on ſeeing his Statue, felt ſo affecting a Remembrance of the rare Qualities of *Henry* IV. that I could not avoid going up to the Iron Rails, and kiſſing them with infinite Reſpect. I muſt too own, that once or twice, I have burſt there into Tears. I know there are ſome People who will call this Folly, but I muſt tell them that I deſpiſe alike their Cenſure and their Approbation. The Deſcendants of thoſe who reached the Knife to that auguſt Monarch's Breaſt, can have no Idea of the Senſe honeſt People have of his Fate. The Difference between them and me is this; I ſalute, with proper Reſpect, the Statue of a great and good King, while they ſuperſtitiouſly, and with a ſilly Veneration, kiſs the Relicks of ſome doting Monk or canting Hypocrite.

LETTER CXXX.

JACOB BRITO, *to* AARON MONCECA.

IT is ſome time, my dear *Monceca*, ſince I left off ſpeaking to you of the Manners and Cuſtoms of the ancient *Egyptians:* But I am now going to communicate to you what I have obſerved moſt curious in their Tombs. I have examined many, and in all have met with what abundantly ſatisfied my Curioſity.

There

There lies ſtretched on the Banks of the *Nile*, a ſandy Plain, which is, as it were, the general Burying-Place of this Nation. It is full of Sepulchres, many of which have been opened. There are found in moſt of them Mummies in Cheſts or Coffins, which are ſtill intire. Near theſe Coffins are frequently found the Images of thoſe Gods, to whom, while living, the Perſon was moſt devoted. Thence is evidently derived a Cuſtom amongſt the *Turks*, of having certain Sentences out of the Alcoran interred with them, as alſo that practiſed by ſome ſuperſtitious *Nazarenes*, of having the Images of their Patrons buried with them: Thus you ſee this vain and ſilly Notion is far from being new. After this manner Superſtition is perpetuated, and one Religion adopts the Chimæras and Puerilities of another.

The Method in uſe among ſome of the *Nazarenes*, of placing in their Churches certain Images, *ex voto*, in diſcharge of their *Vows*, is in like manner taken from the *Egyptians* and the *Greeks*. When they had either ſuffered Shipwreck, or very narrowly eſcaped ſome great Danger, they cauſed it to be repreſented in a Piece of a moderate Size, and when, by ſhewing it, they had excited the Charity and Compaſſion of the People, at laſt they dedicated it in the Temple of that Divinity to whom they thought themſelves moſt indebted for their Preſervation.

What in this reſpect was done two thouſand five hundred Years ago, is practiſed at this Day. The Saints, Male and Female, have taken place of the Gods and Goddeſſes. St. *George* ſupplies the room of *Mars*, St. *Anthony* that of *Pan*, St. *Lucia* ſtands for *Diana*, and St. *Cecilia* for *Minerva*. There is no Corporation, no Company of Tradeſmen without its Patron. The Shoe-makers have St. *Criſpin*, the Taylors St. *Placidus*, the Rope-Dancers St. *Pan-*

Pantaleon. Tho' theſe laſt were never regularly incorporated, yet the Danger they ſtand expoſed to, of breaking Legs and Arms, hath obliged them to look out a Patron for their whole Fraternity.

When I was at *Venice*, I was often in the Churches of the *Nazarenes*, the Walls of which were covered with Thighs, and Heads, and Hands, and Arms, and Feet, *&c.* all made of Wax, and conſecrated to the Saint unto whom the Church was dedicated, in Acknowledgment of Miracles ſuppoſed to have been wrought by him. This formed at once the moſt pleaſant, and withal, the moſt whimſical Sight in the World.

A *Nazarene*, who had not much Faith in Legs of Wax, told me a pleaſant Story when I was in *Germany*. He inform'd me that one *Michon* having had the good Luck to marry his Sweetheart, exerted himſelf in an extraordinary Way for ſome Months after their Nuptials. He had a ſound Conſtitution; the Accompliſhment of his Deſires added to his Vigor, and Madam *Michon* thought herſelf exceeding happy in her Choice. However, an unlucky Accident came ſuddenly to damp the Felicity of this happy Bride. Mr. *Michon*, who was neither a Saint nor a true Lover, uſed to ſtray now and then, believing it incompatible with the Character of a Smart, to be confined like the Vulgar. One Evening having ſupp'd with his Friends, and the Wine putting odd Notions into his Head, he went to a certain Temple of *Venus*, where he offered, according to the Cuſtom of the Place, and brought away a flaming Return. Mr. *Michon*, however, perceived it in time, and being exceſſively embaraſſed, impoſed on his Wife a Courſe of Abſtinence, equally unuſual and unſatisfactory. She endured for ſome time this Misfortune without ſpeaking, but at laſt loſing all Patienc, ſhe ventured to enquire the Reaſon of his Behaviour

in the following Terms. I cannot conceive, ſaid ſhe, Mr. *Michon*, whence your Indifference proceeds; but I am very ſenſible that for ſome time paſt we have lived together pretty coolly. This Diſcourſe perplexed the Husband not a little, he would not on any ſcore tell the matter of fact, and yet finding it neceſſary to ſay ſomewhat, he firſt fetched a deep Sigh, and then in a faint Voice proceeded thus: Alas! Madam *Michon!* I have met with the ſaddeſt Accident! The poor Woman alarm'd at this Introduction, preſſed him to explain himſelf. Is it ſo, cry'd ſhe, that you have ſtill your Secrets; what then is become of that eternal Affection you ſwore to bear me? I am going continued he, to inform you of an Adventure which has driven me almoſt to diſpair. I went ſome days ago with a few Friends to a Country Place not far from Town. There walking about I attempted to jump over a little Ditch, and my Foot ſlipping, — I can ſcarce tell you the reſt. I made ſuch an Effort to ſave my ſelf, that I quite ſtrain'd not my Leg or my Ancle, but a Part of far greater Conſequence. O mercy! exclaim'd Madam *Michon*, what is it you tell me? Is it poſſible? Yes, my dear Spouſe, return'd Mr. *Michon*, there is nothing more certain. But bad as it is, my Malady is not without Remedy. An eminent Surgeon, under whoſe Care I am, aſſures me, that in ſix Weeks I ſhall be certainly cured, without retaining the leaſt Inconvenience from the Accident. O, rejoin'd the Lady, you have quite revived my Spirits, I was afraid your Illneſs would have been far more ſtubborn and dangerous. We muſt, however, neglect nothing which may contribute to your Cure; I'll go and offer a Vow to St. *Pantaleon*. 'Tis to him we addreſs in caſe of broken Bones or ſtrain'd Sinews; I doubt not, but by his Aſſiſtance, to ſee

you ſpeedily recovered. Madam *Michon* made haſte to execute her Deſign. She made the Figure of the Part afflicted in Wax, and then away ſhe hurried to the Church of the Cordeliers, to have it expoſed in an honourable Place. A young Lad carried the Offering in a Baſon covered with Linen. The Monk who performed the Ceremony removing the Cloth, was ſurprized at the Sight, and turning away his Eyes, Carry away that, ſaid he to the Boy. Father, reply'd the Child, in a ſoft Tone, it is the Vow of Madam *Michon*. Carry it away, I ſay, cry'd the Monk haſtily, and tell her, we have incomparably better in the Convent. Thus Madam *Michon*'s Vow loſt its place, but her Husband recovered ſpeedily for all that.

The *Nazarenes* are the firſt in turning their own Superſtitions into ridicule: But they continue Slaves to them for all that. This, dear *Monceca*, is an evident Proof that there is little Solidity in their Judgments. I cannot well comprehend how Folks act commonly directly oppoſite to their Manner of Thinking. One is ſurprized to ſee the moſt extravagant things done ſometimes by Men who diſcourſe very reaſonably. When one hears theſe People talk, one is apt to imagine that they were intended for the Inſtructors of Mankind; yet, upon examining their Conduct, the Man of Senſe is loſt, we diſcover in his ſtead, the Bigot, the Furioſo and the Debauchée.

I now return, my Friend, to the Tombs of the ancient *Egyptians*. You know that the Pyramids, which are ſo famous, are the Monuments of Kings. The Grandees of the Kingdom followed their Examples, and cauſed thoſe to be erected which are diſtinguiſhed by the Name of the leſſer Pyramids, and lie along the Side of the River. As for private Perſons, they were interred in the Catacombs which

are

are very numerous in the ſandy Plain ſituated in the Neighbourhood of the ſouthern Pyramids. When they were interr'd in theſe Tombs, they covered the Stone which cloſed up the Entrance four or five Foot deep with Sand, which contributed not a little to the Preſervation of the Bodies, by ſecuring them from the Injuries of the exterior Air. Over and above this Precaution, there was no *Egyptian* but was embalmed after his Deceaſe, in a manner more or leſs coſtly, according to the Abilities of his Heirs.

Superſtition was alſo the Cauſe of all this Care about Funerals. The Prieſts aſſured the People, that in a certain Period of Years, an entire Revolution would happen, and thoſe whoſe Bodies could be preſerved to that time, would have them reſtored and live in them again. Every one, from that Self-love which is inherent to Man, being deſirous of finding at that time his old Caſe, directed his Heirs to take all imaginable Care of their Bodies. What aſtoniſhes me is, that the Hump-back'd, the Lame, the Blind, and every other maim'd kind of Folks, had as ſtrong an Inclination as the reſt, to inhabit a ſecond time ſo incommodious and ſo diſagreeable a Lodging. It is apparent from hence, that theſe *Egyptians* did likewiſe believe, that when the Body was once deſtroyed, there wasno getting another. However, 'tis certain, that all this Pains was taken for the Cabinets of the Curious and the Apothecaries Shops of the preſent Times.

Amongſt the Bodies of deceaſed great Men, which had been preſerved through many Ages, and were actually intire in the time of *Auguſtus*, Hiſtorians mention particularly that of *Alexander* the Great. They tell us farther, that *Auguſtus* being in *Egypt* had the Curioſity of going to ſee the Tomb of that famous Prince, and that he ſaw therein the

Body in a Shrine of Glaſs ſubſtituted in the room of one of Gold, which was taken away by *Seleuchus Cybioſactes* *. 'Tis idle, dear *Monceca*, for Sovereigns the moſt potent and the moſt dreaded, to dream of reſpect being paid them after Death. Time delivers Men from that ſervile Attention which living Princes exact, and the Tombs of the old *Egyptian* Kings, that of *Alexander* and other Heroes of Antiquity, have been violated with as little Ceremony as thoſe of private Men. They were not ſo much as ſpared in Times wherein their Memories were recent. We adore, in a manner, living Princes, and Crouds of Flatterers continually purſue them with Vows for their Proſperity: But,

When breathleſs, they are Duſt become,
And all the Glories of their Pride,
Are ſhrunk within the ſilent Tomb,
Tho' for its Splendor it be ey'd,
Yet they are low and loſt indeed,
And hungry Worms upon them feed.

There all their ſwelling Titles loſe,
Givers of Peace and Thunderbolts of War;
And as no more they can their Bounty uſe,
There free from Flatterers they are.
Nature makes equal in their Graves,
Whom Fortune made or Lords or Slaves †.

See, my dear *Monceca*, what becomes of Monarchs the moſt potent and the moſt redoubtable! It is impoſſible to expreſs the ſudden, the certain Fall of human Greatneſs better than *Malherbe* has done.

The

* Suetonius *in* Octav. *cap.* xviii. Dion. Caſſ. *lib.* 1. *p.* 454. Strabo. *lib.* xvii, *p.* 794.

† Malherbe.

The firſt time I read over the Works of that inimitable Poet, I was prodigiouſly ſtruck with theſe Lines. A Native of *France*, ſettled at *Pera*, made me a preſent of his Writings; which I have conſtantly preſerved with the greateſt care, as ſcarce inferiour to thoſe of *Horace*.

Take care of yourſelf, dear *Monceca*, live content, happy, and without care; and let me hear from you ſometimes.

Cairo.

LETTER CXXXI.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

IN my laſt I wrote you my Sentiments concerning thoſe great Princes, who are in ſome meaſure deify'd by Poſterity; and I then ventured without Ceremony to give *Henry* IV. of *France*, Preference before them all. I have often reflected ſince that time on the Reaſons which induced my ſo doing; and the more I conſider them, the more I am perſuaded that I was in the right in ſo doing. I have ſo thorough a ſenſe of the great Virtues of that Monarch, that I make no queſtion but Heaven deſign'd the Puniſhment of *France* by the Civil Wars, and other Miſchiefs ſhe endured, during the Minority of *Lewis* XIII. for the little care taken in avenging that terrible Parricide. They contented themſelves with puniſhing the Aſſaſſin;

and the Loſs of ſo great and good a King, was follow'd only by the Execution of a ſingle Villain. On ſuch an occaſion, all, who by their Practices or by their Diſcourſes had promoted ſo abominable a Fact, ſhould have been wafted together to their long Homes, through a Sea of Blood. All the Proſcriptions of the Triumvirates which made *Rome* itſelf tremble, would have been juſtifiable at ſuch a time; and there ought to have been offered on the Tomb of that generous Prince every Perſon, on whom a juſt and well-grounded Suſpicion could have been fixed.

It ſeemed as if Heaven reſerved the Puniſhment of this Crime to itſelf, in order to render it more terrible, and to exert itſelf on ſuch occaſions in an extraordinary manner: For ſo it is, that Providence rarely permits Aſſaſſins to eſcape even in this Life their deſerved Rewards, eſpecially when it is a Prince on whom their Cruelties have been exerciſed. The Murder of *Cæſar* is a pregnant Inſtance of the Truth of what I ſay. Hiſtory informs us, that of ſixty Perſons who conſpired againſt him, not one died a natural Death. They all periſhed miſerably, and with all the Circumſtances of Horror that can be conceived. *Caſſius*, who was the laſt, met a Fate as melancholly as that of the reſt *. The Deity, always careful and attentive to the Safety and Tranquility of Men, ſeems to have bound himſelf to puniſh even in this World ſuch Wretches as dare attack the Perſons of Princes.

Reflect, my dear *Iſaac*, on a thing which is not more ſtrange than true. Almoſt all the *Nazarene* Monarchs who have been aſſaſſinated, have met with their Fate from the Hands of Monks, or from Perſons influenced by them. It was a Dominican

* Plutarc. *in* Cæſare. Sueton. *in* Jul. Cæſ. *cap.* lxxx. Eutrop. *lib.* vi. *circa finem.*

minican who poiſon'd the Emperor *Henry* VII; and in the Performance of that execrable Fact, he had recourſe to the moſt ſacred Rite in his Religion. Another Monk of the ſame Order, plunged his Poniard into the Breaſt of *Henry* III. of *France*. A Jeſuit ſolicited *, and at length influenced a crack-brain'd Youth † to attempt the Murder of the beſt King in the World ‖. What Ills may they not perpetrate, when aſſembled in a Body? And yet thoſe who ought moſt to hate and to deteſt them, ſuffer them to throng about their Perſons through an Exceſs of Weakneſs. We are told, that *Lewis* the XIIIth, of whom I was ſpeaking to you, trembled when he ſaw a Monk, and did not care that they ſhould remain long in his Preſence. I readily believe this; but you may rely upon it, that even to this day Monks are forbid to enter the Caſtle of *Verſailles* without Permiſſion, or to come any where elſe where the King is. I was informed of this, when I was at *Paris*; and I am poſitive, as to the Fact.

In ſpite of all theſe Marks of Contempt, which are ſhewn towards the Monks on certain Occaſions, I think we may juſtly apply to them what *Tacitus* ſays of Aſtrologers, againſt whom they continually iſſued Edicts, in order to drive them out of *Rome*, and yet kept them there notwithſtanding ‡. But this is a Buſineſs belongs to the *Nazarenes*, and not to us; if they have a mind to be governed by Monks, what have we to do to find fault; let us leave them in their Infatuation, and proceed to a more entertaining Subject.

* John Guignard.

† John Chatel.

‖ Henry IV.

‡ *Genus Hominum Potentibus infidum, ſperantibus fallax, quod in Civitate noſtrâ, & vetabitur ſemper, & retinebitur.* Tacit. Hiſt. *lib.* I.

I am ſoon to imbark for *England*, with two Men of very different Characters; the one is an extravagant Admirer of the *Italian* Muſick, a great Traveller for the ſake of improving himſelf in this Science, and who has been actually in *Italy* for that purpoſe a conſiderable ſpace of time. He never ſpeaks of any thing but Concerts, Symphonies, Virtuoſi, Sonatas, Motets, Cantatas, *&c.* The other is a Metaphyſician, everlaſtingly in the Clouds, and who employs all his time in reconciling the Syſtems of *Deſcartes*, *Gaſſendi*, *Locke* and *Malebranche*. He is diſturbed in his Converſation, ſo as to appear diſtracted; and ſometimes one can ſcarce get four Words out of him in a whole Day. One ſees him frequently ſtamp, bite his Nails, ſcratch his Head; and when the Queſtion is very intricate, you would think by his Diſtortions that he laboured under ſome very terrible Diſtemper. It happens now and then that in the midſt of his profound Meditations, our Lover of Muſick conſults him on the Beauty of a new Air; *Sir*, ſays he, *do me the favour to give me your opinion of this Song*. Upon this he falls a ſinging, and whilſt he is a quavering his *Italian*, the Metaphyſician ſhrugs up his Shoulders, turns up his Eyes towards Heaven, and from the bottom of his heart wiſhes Song and Songſter both at the Devil. He endeavours to get away, and to ſhelter himſelf in another Room; but the Man of Song, to prevent this, ſeizes his Arm. *Ah, dear Sir*, ſays he, *don't ſtir, let me ſing that Verſe over again!* —— *Well! Is it not fine?* ——— *Without queſtion, that* Vinci *is a great Man! I proteſt, I would rather have been the Author of his* Artaxerxes, *than be King of* Corſica. *Speak truth now, Sir, and acknowledge, that* Philoſophers *make but a mean figure in the World, when compared with* Muſicians.

Theſe

Theſe laſt Words bring the Metaphyſician to his Senſes, and how much ſoever he was buried in Thought, he could not endure with Patience to hear theſe great Men run down, of whom he thinks it his honour that he is a Diſciple. *You think then*, ſays he, with a diſdainful Smile, *that a* Muſician *ought to receive a deal of Reſpect in the World, and that there is a great deal of Knowledge and Genius requiſite in order to ſing* Re, Mi, Fa, Sol. *Go, go, Sir, you only banter. Hark you, I will tell you of what Uſe* Muſick *is of, in the World. It ſerves for*——— nothing; *or, at moſt, it ſerves only to amuſe a few poor* giggling Girls, *and effeminate* Petit Maitres. *But* Philoſophy *inſtructs Men how to behave wiſely. This gives them Purity of Manners, teaches them to bridle their Paſſions; there is no Secret in Nature, which it does not unfold. In a word, it employs our Wits, and ſatisfies our Deſires, at one and the ſame time.*

" But tell me, Sir, *reply'd our Virtuoſo in Muſick*, " are not you a Philoſopher, or don't you " at leaſt ſtudy Philoſophy; are you in conſequence " of it content and quiet in your Mind? You " ſhall hardly perſuade me of that. I ſee you " in continual Motion; you do not enjoy ſo much " as a Moment's Eaſe. You eat ſometimes, with- " out knowing that you are eating; and ſpeak " too, not ſeldom in the very ſame way. Your " Head is ſo full of Chimæra's, that you can hard- " ly tell when 'tis Day and when 'tis Night. " T'other day you took into your head to throw " yourſelf into a Reſervoir; and if I, good-for- " nothing Man of Song, had not catched hold of " your Coat, your Philoſophy had been in great " hazard of being drown'd. Do you think to " perſuade me, that a Science which tranſports " People ſo, as not to ſee a great Collection of

" Water at the foot of a Gravel-walk, communicates any kind of Wiſdom? For my part, to tell you the truth, I cannot help thinking that you Philoſophers are very comical ſort of People. They are reading, forſooth, what is written in the Heavens, without knowing what paſſes under their Feet *. You have a mighty Contempt for Muſick, Sir; but I defy you to prove that it is half ſo miſchievous, as that ſort of Fanaticiſm, which you call Philoſophy. If it raviſhes the Senſes, it is in ſo ſoft, ſo ſweet a manner, that we fall into a kind of ecſtatic Repoſe.

" Do but obſerve a Man coming out of an Opera Houſe, you ſee him beating time with his Feet as it were for half an hour. If he is young and light-timber'd, he cuts a few capers, and preſently falls a ſinging a favourite Air. He comes up to a Woman with a gallant Air, like that of *Acis* when he ſalutes *Galatea*; all is eaſy, all is pleaſant, like the Place from whence he comes. On the other hand, obſerve a young Fellow at the Univerſity as he is coming from the publick Schools, his Eyes how wild! his Air how fierce! his Head full of Logick, and a Syllogiſm between his Teeth. One Diſputation juſt finiſhed, he meditates another; and is conſidering in his Mind what new Arguments may be made uſe of for demoliſhing his Adverſary. He is everlaſtingly out of humour; and all his Knowledge, all his Philoſophy ſerves only to torment him. Tell me, dear Sir, which is moſt uſeful to Society, that kind of Study which vexes People, puts them as it were out of their Senſes; and under pretence of rendring them wiſe, does in fact make them

* *Quod eſt ante Pedes nemo ſpectat; Cœli ſcrutantur plagas.* Cicero de Divinat. *lib.* ii.

" them Fools; or that which amuſes them agree-
" ably, removes all Chagrin, and leaves the Soul
" in perfect Tranquility. This, dear Sir, is the
" ſpecifick Difference between Muſick and Philo-
" ſophy. You may ſay what you pleaſe, but I
" ſhall never alter my Opinion."

Mighty well! reply'd the Metaphyſician, with an Air of Contempt; *I would adviſe you to paſs all your Life in Singing, you will be then upon the level with the Nightingales. As for me, I apprehend God has given me a Faculty of Thinking, and I am oblig'd to make uſe of it. I do not pretend to reſtrain you from exerciſing the Talents, beſtowed upon you by Nature; but I expect that you ſhould likewiſe allow me to make uſe of ſuch as have fallen to my Share.*

" You call that Thinking, *reply'd our Advocate*
" *for Harmony*, which is no better than following
" wild and extravagant Ideas, which are the Effects
" of a diſorder'd Imagination; for my part, I
" look upon Thinking in quite another light. I
" apprehend it to be ſuch an Uſe of Reaſon as
" enables me to paſs eaſily through Life, and ad-
" miniſters to all thoſe Wants which in the courſe
" thereof I am ſure to feel. I believe 'tis better
" to leave ſearching into things beyond our Un-
" derſtanding, and to apply our ſelves to that
" ſort of Knowledge which is uſeful and neceſſary.
" As for Example, contriving how to live com-
" modiouſly and happily, to eat, drink, ſleep,
" laugh, ſing, and paſs pleaſantly the Days which
" Heaven beſtows upon us, inſtead of beſtowing
" them in uſeleſs Meditations. Tell me, dear Sir,
" what ſort of Illneſs your way of thinking will
" cure? Can a Man, by ſtudying the Metaphy-
" ſicks, eaſe himſelf of a Megrim. So far from
" it, that it will make him ten times worſe; and

" he

" he had better by half have heard an Overture of " the Opera, or any other agreeable Piece of Mu- " ſick, which might have charm'd his Mind, and " render'd him inſenſible of his Pain. When a " Man is attacked by the Vapours, what good " will Philoſophy do him? Turn him perhaps quite " mad, by increaſing his Melancholy. But on " the other hand, if he hears a Violin, his ill Hu- " mour goes off, his Spirits begin to revive, and " he is as chearful as ever. There cannot be a " ſtronger Demonſtration of the Power of Mu- " ſick, than what is ſeen every Day in *Italy*, in " the Caſe of a Perſon bit by a Tarantula. " Go, harangue the ſick Perſon about the Schemes " of your *Gaſſendi*, *Deſcartes*, and all your Men " of Science, it will ſignify juſt nothing; the " Man will certainly die, in ſpite of all your E- " loquence. Let but a Fiddle enter, up jumps " the Patient, leaps, ſkips, capers, and derives " from Muſick that Remedy which reſtores him " to his Health and Senſes. After he has footed " it an Hour or two, weary and quite worn out, " he falls faſt aſleep; and when he awakes, finds " himſelf perfectly well. All the Philoſophy in " the World can do nothing like this: Can " it?"

I don't know, *Iſaac*, whether the Converſations of my Fellow-Travellers, wiil appear diverting to you; but I aſſure you, they prove ſo to me, and I paſs my moments very agreeably in hearing their Altercations.

May'ſt thou enjoy thy Health, live content and happy, and may the God of our Fathers continue to cover thee with Bleſſings.

Hamburgh.

LETTER

LETTER CXXXII.

JACOB BRITO *to* AARON MONCECA.

THE Diſſenſions, my dear *Monceca*, to which our Brethren ſtand expoſed in this Country, have led me to make many Reflections on the reciprocal Miſchiefs the *Nazarenes* do each other in conſequence of that horrid Maxim, That it is not only lawful, but even neceſſary to exterminate Hereticks. The Conſequences flowing from this cruel Principle are fatal alike to Men of all Beliefs, notwithſtanding thoſe who maintain them do not advert to its neceſſary Conſequence, that it expoſes themſelves to all the Evils they inflict on their Adverſaries. If once they reflected on the Inconveniences which a perſecuting Principle draws after it, they would quickly change their Sentiments.

People that are Hereticks in one Country, are Orthodox in another; as thoſe that are Orthodox in one Place, are Hereticks in another. This Truth will appear plainly, if we conſider ever ſo ſlightly the prevailing Religions throughout *Europe*. A Proteſtant is an Heretick at *Paris*, but is one of the Elect at *London*. A Papiſt is an Idolater in *England*; whereas in *France*, it is held there is no paſſage to Heaven, but by the Popiſh Road. See then, how Nations who believe oppoſitely, agree in believing this, that all are Hereticks who are not of their Religion; that is, of their eſtabliſhed Religion. If we ſhould ſuppoſe the Principles of the Inquiſition ſpread throughout all Nations, what Horrors! what Bloodſhed would they bring upon the

the World! In *Portugal*, in *Spain*, in *France*, in *Italy*, in *Auſtria*, *Bohemia* and *Poland*, they would cut the Throats, burn, break on the Wheel, or maſſacre without Diſtinction, Lutherans, Calviniſts, Church-of-*England* Men, *&c.* In *Holland*, *Great-Britain*, *Denmark* and *Pruſſia*, they would hang and draw Papiſts, if ſome Divines had their way, and the Magiſtrate had no more humanity than the Clergy. In *Muſcovy* they would tyrannize over and condemn to Death both Catholicks and Proteſtants, as equally Hereticks, in diſ-believing the *Ruſſian* Faith. In *Turkey* again, the ſame *Muſcovites* would fall a Sacrifice to the Glory of *Mohammed*; and in *Perſia*, to the Honour of *Ali*.

Obſerve, dear *Monceca*, the Horrors, Crimes and Impieties, which follow inconteſtably from this Maxim, That we ought to perſecute Hereticks, and oblige them to change their Sentiments by Puniſhments and Tortures. If ſuch as pretend to be animated by a true Zeal for the Glory of God, were really influenc'd by any ſuch Spirit, they would be far from endeavouring thus to convince the Mind, or from thinking it a right way to remove Prejudices from the Heart, to have recourſe to ſuch Violences as are contrary to the Law of Nature and the Idea which Reaſon gives Men of the Deity. They would perceive, that in perſecuting their Adverſaries they expoſe their Brethren to the ſame Miſchiefs wherever they were ſcattered in other Places. But inaſmuch as they are guided by their Paſſion, or rather by their Fury, provided they do but accompliſh their Deſigns in the Places where they are Maſters, they never think of what may happen any where elſe, in conſequence of what they do at home.

The Roman-Catholicks, or rather the Court of *Rome*, the Eccleſiaſticks and the Monks employed all

all ſorts of Methods, in order to drive the Proteſtants out of *France*. After a good deal of Murder and Bloodſhed, they brought their Project to bear. But what followed; why, the Popiſh Religion it ſelf received very ſhortly the greateſt Check it ever ſuſtain'd. *England* totally barr'd Popery from returning thither; it coſt an unhappy King three Kingdoms; or rather it coſt a weak Prince ſuch a Sacrifice for confiding in Prieſts; and the Proteſtants they had baniſhed ſerved for a Pretence to exile an infinite Number of Papiſts, and ſeizing their Effects.

While at *Paris*, they deſtroyed without Mercy whatever wore the Appearance of Proteſtantiſm; the Prince of *Orange* wiſely made uſe of the Handle their Madneſs furniſhed. To ſay the truth, his Affairs would have ſuffered if thoſe of the Reform'd Religion had been more mildly treated. To the Perſecutions raiſed by the *French* Clergy, and to the Clergy in another Country, that Prince ſtood indebted for the Crown of *Great Britain*. If the *Jeſuits*, from their Itch to governing, had not put King *James* on ſo many Extravagancies, *William* III. would have found no Occaſion of going over to *England*, in order to maintain the Rights and Liberties of an oppreſſed Nation. All Hiſtorians agree, that King *James* puſh'd his Attachment and Submiſſion to the Jeſuits much too far. Madam *de la Fayette*, tho' a zealous Catholick, acknowledges nevertheleſs in her Memoirs of the Court of *France* during the Years 1688 and 1689, that when they came in that Country thoroughly to know the Character of this Prince, they retained for him only a ſort of Pity bordering on Contempt. The Archbiſhop of *Rheims*, *Maurice le Tellier*, as we are inform'd by that Lady, could not help ſaying, in a ſneering Way, *Look upon that good Man, he quitted*

three

three Kingdoms for one Maſs. It was alſo thought a Mark of his bad Taſte, that he was continually beſet with Jeſuits, and that he affected to ſay that he was of their Order *. The Continuators of *Rapin*'s Hiſtory of *England*, tho' they are declared Enemies to the Proteſtant Religion, have made no difficulty of inſerting this ſingular Story, and of adding to it the following Reflection. *They*, that is, the People of *France*, *went ſo far, as to impute ſecretly his Misfortunes to him, as if they were Crimes, on account of his having engaged* France *in a tedious and ruinous War, of which they foreſaw the Effects* †.

It was not, however, King *James*, dear *Monceca*, to whom the *French* ought to have attributed the Troubles and Difficulties that were brought upon them by the maintaining his Cauſe. It was to them who gave him thoſe pernicious Counſels, and plunged him into that Abyſs from whence he never got out; it was to them that they ſhould have attributed thoſe Evils, and on them they ſhould have devolved their Spleen. The Misfortunes of that Prince were the Effects of the Ambition of the Jeſuits, and of their pernicious Maxim, that all means are to be employed for deſtroying Hereticks. The *Engliſh* had before their Eyes the Example of the *French* Proteſtants; and they were afraid with good Reaſon, that they ſhould one Day find it their own Caſe. " If the King, ſaid they, begins to " diminiſh our Privileges, and to extend thoſe of " our Adverſaries, we ſhall by little and little be " reduced into a Situation which will incapacitate " us from reſiſting the Deſigns of the Court of " *Rome*. At preſent they make uſe of Fraud, by " and by they may make uſe of open Force. The " *French* Proteſtants ſet *Henry* IV. upon the " Throne;

* P. 120, 124, 155.

† Continuation de Rapin Thoyras, tom. xi. p. 41.

" Throne; ſo long as he lived, they were not op-
" preſſed, but a little after his Death they began
" to trick them, and then to perſecute them; at
" laſt they baniſhed them, and taught them to ex-
" perience the Effects of that abominable Maxim,
" that to make uſe of all Methods to extirpate
" Hereticks, is allowed by divine and human
" Laws. Let us then prevent the Storm which
" threatens us; let us ſtrangle the Serpent we have
" nouriſhed in our Boſom, and give a mortal
" Wound to Popery, by dethroning a King who
" protects it, and would eſtabliſh it on the Ruins
" of our Liberty, and our Religion. If there is
" any thing baſe in this Action, our Enemies have
" no Right to reproach us; if we rebel, we rebel
" againſt a Popiſh Prince, and they ſet us the Ex-
" ample in refuſing to acknowledge a Proteſtant
" one. Did they not publiſh a Million of Writings,
" to prove that a People were not bound to ſubmit
" to a Heretick Prince, their Preachers employed
" all their Talents for publiſhing this Doctrine in
" the midſt of *Paris*. At preſent we find it neceſ-
" ſary to adopt their Maxim; we do no more than
" dethrone a King attainted and convicted of Pope-
" ry, which, with reaſon, we look upon as of all
" others the moſt dangerous Hereſy."

Obſerve, my dear *Monceca*, in the Remarks made by the *Engliſh*, what fatal Effects the Doctrine of Repriſals in religious Wars will inevitably have. Conſider, at the ſame time, the Miſchief which the ungoverned Rage of different Sects hath brought upon whole Nations. For after all, notwithſtanding the Riſques the Proteſtants in *England* might run, I can by no means approve of their Conduct. I am thoroughly perſuaded, that it is not lawful for Subjects, on any Pretence whatſoever, to take up Arms againſt their Prince; and I

have

have often, with great Pleaſure, heard you maintain the ſame thing with much Vivacity. However, when once we admit, that Men are at liberty to break their Faith to Hereticks, and to compel them by force to alter their Opinions, we open a wide Gap to all ſorts of Diſorders; we ſhake the Thrones of Kings, and breathe into the People among whom we inhabit, a Spirit of Treaſon and Rebellion.

If it were once thoroughly eſtabliſhed throughout *Europe*, That Religion has nothing to do with Government, how happy would the People be, and how much more at eaſe their Kings, than now they are? What is it to them, if ſome of their Subjects ſing in *French*, in *Engliſh*, in *Dutch*, or in *German*, while others believe the Pſalms are profaned in any other Language but *Latin*? If for this purpoſe they aſſemble on *Saturday* or on *Sunday*, pay their Taxes, and diſcharge all the Duties they owe to Society? But, ſay the Politicians, when there are many Religions in a Country, it is impoſſible but they ſhould produce civil Wars. This I admit, if any one of theſe Religions maintains that pernicious Maxim, That it is lawful to employ all Methods for ſubverting and deſtroying others; and that ſometimes all the other Sects will unite together, in order to demoliſh that which would otherwiſe tyrannize. But in a well-governed State, where the People in general are perſuaded that every Man ought to be allowed to think freely, and to ſerve God as he ſees proper, all the World will enjoy Peace and Quiet, tho' there ſhould be fifty different Religions in the Dominion of that State. In order to be convinced of the Truth of this Propoſition, we need only enquire into the preſent Situation of *England* and *Holland*. How many different Sects are there in thoſe Countries? Yet they give each other

other no manner of Trouble. *Jews*, Anti-Trinitarians, Quakers, Anabaptiſts, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Independents, Muggletonians, diſpute ſometimes with each other, but they never think of cutting Throats; and if ſometimes there happens any Troubles on account of religious Controverſies in *England*, all the different Sects treat it as a Popiſh Spirit, and immediately enter into a League offenſive and defenſive, in order to cover themſelves from its Effects. In a word, they ſeem to be all equally afraid of this pernicious Principle, that it is a juſt and reaſonable thing to perſecute Hereticks for their own Good. To this Point a certain Author teſtifies, who both had an Opportunity of knowing, and was well acquainted with the Terror all Religions in *England* have of Popery. "If "one, ſays he, ſhould ask me to what Degree dif- "ferent Sects are to be tolerated? I anſwer, that "they ought all to ſtand on equal Terms; that "they ſhould at all times and in all places, be at "liberty to juſtify their Faith, by Diſputing, by "Preaching in their Aſſemblies, and by Publiſh- "ing Books. But Popery ought to be entirely de- "prived even of the Benefit of Toleration, not as "a Religion, but as a tyrannical Faction, ready "to oppreſs others, and ſo far from being content "with an Equality, that it is always ſtriving for "Dominion, and not only ſo, but ſeeks alſo the "utter Deſtruction of ſuch as oppoſe it *."

To this Paſſage from the *Virgil* of *England*, permit me to add another from an illuſtrious Defender of Toleration, too much addicted to Philoſophy to fall into any Prejudices on the Score of Religion. "Never fear, ſays he, that the Miſſionaries ſhould "quarrel amongſt themſelves, when the great Bu- "ſineſs

* *Milton*'s Miſcellaneous Works.

" ſineſs of Dragooning is on foot. The *Thomiſts*,
" and the *Scotiſts*, the *Moliniſts* and the *Janſeniſts*,
" forget their Differences, baniſh their Diſputes,
" and labour one and all in the Execution of that
" Catholick Precept, *Compel them to come in* *."

One thing, *Monceca*, ſurprizes me, the Popiſh *Nazarenes* are by no means ignorant of the Miſchiefs induced by their violent Conduct on their Brethren in other Places. They know very well what Reproaches thoſe Brethren of theirs ſuffer on account of theſe Perſecutions, and of their Luſt of Power; and yet, inſtead of behaving more mildly, they act with greater Rancour than ever, as if they intended to perpetuate Perſecutions, inſtead of putting an end to them. On the other hand, their Antagoniſts, poſſeſſed with the ſame unaccountable Spight, torment innocent Perſons, who have nothing to do with the Cruelties committed by their Brethren. What Connection is there between an *Engliſh* Papiſt and an *Italian* Jeſuit? Or why ſhould one be puniſhed for the Faults of the other. It is as abſolutely Popiſh to perſecute an honeſt Roman Catholick in *Ireland*, as it is to baniſh a Proteſtant of *France*. Ought there to be Reprizals in Matters of Religion? What Matter of Triumph! What Subject for Reflection, *Monceca!* doth the unequitable Conduct of the *Nazarene* Sects afford to an honeſt *Jew?*

Fare thee well, *Monceca*, live content and happy.

Lisbon.

* Bayle, Dictionaire Hiſtorique & Critique, *tom.* iii. *p.* 339.

LETTER

LETTER CXXXIII.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a Rabbi, at* Conſtantinople.

IT is not, dear *Iſaac*, above four or five Days ſince I came to *London*. It is therefore impoſſible for me to give you any juſt Idea of the Character of the *Engliſh*. It is true I have taken notice of many Things which ſtrike me, and which are certainly worthy the Attention of a Traveller; but as yet I have not had Leiſure to look into them ſufficiently. There is one thing which renders it very difficult to characteriſe the *Engliſh*. It is this: They have a great many Virtues, which ſeem directly oppoſite to Vices with which they are however tainted. The Contrarieties which one is ſure to diſcern in examining the Manners and the Mode of thinking amongſt theſe People, appear ſo extraordinary, that it requires a very ſerious Examination before one can pretend to aſſign their good or ill Qualities.

In order to give a true and juſt Notion of this Nation, it is abſolutely neceſſary to diveſt one's ſelf of all Prejudices, to forget that one is a *Frenchman*, a *German*, or *Italian*, and to form all our Sentiments of Men by Rules furniſhed by the Light of Reaſon. My Opinion is, that a Judge thus qualified, will find in the *Engliſh* many great and ſhining Qualities, tho' ſhaded by not a few Follies and Vices. But

as

as there is no Nation poſſeſſed of Worth unabated by ſome diſadvantageous Qualities, ſo if the Virtues of the *Engliſh* are found to be far more conſiderable than their Faults, we cannot, with any Shew of Juſtice, decry them as a People, or expect that while they are Men, they ſhould not participate of the Frailties to which human Nature is liable.

I ſee, ſince I have been here, that the Inhabitants of this Country in general are large, well made, agile, robuſt People. I perceive likewiſe, that their exterior Form is in ſome meaſure a Picture of their inward Frame of Mind. Many intelligent People have aſſured me, that the Vigour and Activity of an *Engliſh* Genius, is not inferior to the Strength and Nimbleneſs of an *Engliſhman*'s Body. Of this I ſhall endeavour to give you Proofs in my ſubſequent Letters, and promiſe you to communicate whatever Diſcoveries I make here, with a Sincerity becoming a Philoſopher, to whom Mankind ſeems to be but one great Nation.

On my Arrival in *London*, I could not but take notice of that Plenty, Magnificence and Contempt of little Things for which the *Engliſh*, as a People, are diſtinguiſhed when ſpoken of in other Nations. I likewiſe obſerved that Fierceneſs which Strangers are ſo apt to call Inſolence; and from the beſt Enquiry I have been able to make into it, I can by no means think it merits ſo harſh an Appellation.

If one were to judge of the *Engliſh* by what is ſaid of them by other Nations, and regulate one's Opinion by theirs, one muſt fall into very groſs Errors. Moſt of the Relations written by Travellers, are ſtrongly ſeaſoned with that Prejudice againſt *England*, which however ill founded, is ſpread but too generally throughout *Europe*. It is true indeed, that the *Engliſh* have given ſome Cauſe for this, by their common manner of preferring themſelves to all

all the reſt of Mankind; an Indecency ever attended with ill Conſequences.

This Fault, however, is not peculiar to them; it is common, in ſome degree or other, to all Nations. To ſpeak freely, the *Engliſh* puſh it too far, and with too little Reſerve. As they are rich and powerful, they think, and ſure it is a great Fault, that they are not bound to keep Meaſures with other People. But notwithſtanding this, all the Tales which are daily told of their Brutality and want of Manners, deſerve rather Pity than Correction; and one ſhould rather deſpiſe than attempt to confute them. I muſt allow that the *Engliſh* are not very deſirous of being acquainted with Strangers; and when they are acquainted with them, give them every now and then to underſtand that they are their Betters in every reſpect; and I do admit that this Humour is ridiculous. Far be it from me to excuſe ſuch an unhappy Oddity of Temper, ſo contrary to the Rules of good Manners, and even to thoſe of Reaſon. But ſtill there is a good deal of Difference between Inſolence and a good Opinion of one's ſelf. Where is there a Creature more opinionated and ſelf-conceited than a *French Petit-Maitre*; and yet who is more civil, more complaiſant, or more polite than he? To ſay the truth, the *Engliſh*, to their good Opinion of themſelves, add the Vanity alſo of giving others to underſtand as much, and it is this that renders their Conduct ſo diſguſtful.

A Stranger in this Country cannot walk the Streets without hearing the People enter into a Deſcription of him, and blaming whatever he has about his Perſon differing from themſelves. This puts a Traveller unavoidably out of Humour, he cannot with Patience hear his Countrymen injured through his Sides, and himſelf tacitely cenſured as well

well as the reſt. When therefore he comes home, he remembers nothing of the good Qualities of the *Engliſh*, their Faults only remain freſh in his Memory, and he paints them in ſuch Colours as Spleen and Vengeance furniſh him with.

I have done my utmoſt, *Iſaac*, to diſcover the true Sources of the Pride and Haughtineſs of the *Engliſh*, their Contempt of other Nations, and particularly of the *French*; and I imagine, that without much Difficulty, I am come at the true Cauſe. The Refugees, by their own Conduct, have inſpired theſe People with a contemptible Idea of their former Condition, and by Reflection, with high Notions of their own. They who are opulent themſelves, and live in the midſt of Riches and Abundance, regard with an Eye of Pity, Men ſtruggling with Want; and yet ſuch as in this Country are not bleſſed with the Goods of Fortune, do not try all Methods, and endeavour at any Rate to better their Condition. On the contrary, ſatisfied with a little, while they enjoy it with Liberty, they live quietly and chearfully. We ſee few *Engliſhmen* going to ſeek their Fortunes; they bluſh at the Thoughts of getting Money in the Way of ſome other Adventurers. Their Commerce is their ſole Reſource; a Way equally reputable to themſelves, and uſeful to their Country. It is not therefore at all ſtrange that Men who think in this reſpect ſo philoſophically, ſhould deſpiſe People whom they ſee running all the World over in queſt of Money, endeavouring to acquire it by all ſorts of Means, even by ſuch as with them paſs for ſhameful and ſcandalous Methods.

One may venture to affirm, that ſuch of the *Engliſh* as are well to paſs, are fierce and haughty in right of their Fortunes, and that ſuch as are in a meaner

meaner Condition, are vain and proud, becauſe they know how to be ſatisfied with their Condition.

The great Number of Knights of the Induſtry which ſwarm in the City of *London*, contributes not a little to the giving the *Engliſh* an ill Opinion of the Foreigners in general, and of the *French* in particular. Such as have never travelled, form their Ideas of Strangers, according to the Conduct of thoſe whom they have ſeen judging raſhly of the whole Piece by the worſt Part of its Selvidge.

This, without doubt, is the Cauſe of the Contempt theſe People have for the Inhabitants of every other Country but their own. To this Contempt they join an undiſguiſed Hatred with reſpect to the *French*. On this head the Men of Quality and the Vulgar have but one Way of thinking; indeed it ſeems to be the Topick on which of all others they are beſt agreed. There are ſeveral Reaſons which may be offered for this extraordinary Prejudice; the Wars ſubſiſting as it were continually between the two Nations, their particular Intereſts which almoſt conſtantly thwart each other; and to ſum up all, Religion, which carries all things to Extremities whenever it interferes with national Diſputes.

If the Differences which have ſo long reigned between *France* and *England* were of the ſame Nature with thoſe between the *Germans* and the *French*, the Concluſion of the War would alſo put an end to the Animoſity between the Nations. When People fight for the Glory and Intereſts of their Sovereigns, as ſoon as they have received Satisfaction, the thing is at an end; no body thinks of what is paſt, tho' it frequently happens that whole Provinces have changed their Maſters; the Inhabitants are neither the better nor the worſe for it; they loſe not either their Eſtates or their Privileges, but enjoy, under their new Sovereigns, all that they poſſeſſed under their old. But when there is a

War between *France* and *England*, it is far from being the ſole Concern of Sovereigns. Every private Man has his Share; and as many Merchant as there are in each reſpective Country, ſo many Enemies there are. A *French* Ship taken by the *Engliſh* is a complicated Act, whereby all the Owners of that Ship and Cargo are injured in their tendereſt Concern. Every Burgeſs of *St. Malo's*, every Trader of *Dunkirk* becomes the ſworn Enemy of the Merchants of *London*; and on the other hand, every Captain of a *French* Privateer is a petty Sovereign, and fights in his own Quarrel againſt the *Engliſh* Nation.

The Wars between the Empire and *France* are between Crown'd Heads; the Wars between the *French* and the *Engliſh* are between particular People, and the ancient Hatred on each Side is ſtrengthned by every new Difference; this is much the ſtronger on account of Difference in Religion, which of all other Cauſes moſt keeps up national Antipathies.

All Men abhor ſuch as would put any Reſtraint upon their Conſciences; but even this Abhorrence grows ſtronger, when ſuch as are neither our Maſters, our Friends, or our Countrymen, pretend to meddle with our Religion. The Retreat of the late King *James* II. into *France*; the Succours given him there; the many Attempts made in his Favour, have provoked the *Engliſh* more than a War of twenty Years Duration.

Another thing, which has ſwell'd the Pride and Vanity of that Nation, is the needy and miſerable, and of conſequence, the mean and ſubmiſſive ſtate of a Multitude of *French* People, who have fled thither from time to time on account of their Religion. I do admit, that Folks who have loſt their Eſtates, who are baniſhed their Country, and have no means of eſcaping Want but from the Bounty of the

the *Engliſh*, are excuſable in paying them greater Complaiſance than it would be right in other Circumſtances to do. But ſtill there are ſome Bounds to be kept even in this Caſe, and they ought not to ſtoop to thoſe outrageous Flatteries which of all things depreciate them moſt in the Opinions of thoſe whom they flatter.

The *Engliſh*, who followed the Fortunes of King *James*, ought to have been Patterns to the *French* Refugees. They were baniſhed, as well as they, they had exactly the ſame Grounds for Complaint; and yet diſtinguiſhing their Country from thoſe parcular Perſons who were at the Helm, and were the immediate Inſtruments and Favourites of King *William*, they were as true *Britons* at *St. Germains* as at *London*.

How is it poſſible that People who ſincerely love their Country, who have a Paſſion deeply engraven for it in their Hearts, who are capable of maintaining this Spirit, and this true Greatneſs of Soul, in a ſtrange Country, and under a Load of Misfortunes? How is it poſſible, I ſay, that ſo gallant a People ſhould do otherwiſe than deſpiſe an abject Race of Men, continually decrying the Land of their Nativity, blaming what before they applauded, and blindly approving what they heretofore condemned. It is certain, my Friend, that this Conduct in the *French* hath in part drawn the Contempt of the *Engliſh* upon them. They would have found the ſame Relief if they had kept up their Spirits under their Misfortunes; and if they had ſhewn a Reſolution not to ſacrifice that Love they ought to have had for their Country, for the ſake of a precarious Subſiſtance, I am confident the *Engliſh* would have eſteemed them much more than they do.

Farewell, dear *Iſaac*, and let me often hear from thee.

London.

LETTER CXXXIV.

AARON MONCECA *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

I Begin, dear *Iſaac*, to know the *Engliſh* Nation well enough now to enter on a diſtinct Account of them. At preſent I ſhall not offer any thing to your View relating to their Nobility, which when I do, I muſt diſtinguiſh into various Claſſes, but content my ſelf with endeavouring to give you a clear Notion of the reſt of the Nation.

The *Engliſh* are not ſuch Fools to think Trade a Scandal: Amongſt them a Man of Buſineſs makes a very conſiderable Figure, and with Reaſon; for while he endeavours to enrich himſelf, he at the ſame time contributes towards the enriching of his Country. Almoſt all the Merchants in this Country are the Sons of Knights, or at leaſt of principal Gentlemen; nay, there have been ſometimes Lords, who have thought it no Diſcredit to them that their Brethren and their Children were bred up to Trade.

The Idea which the *Engliſh* have of Merchants, renders People of that Denomination quite another ſort of Men than they are elſewhere. As there is nothing in their Profeſſion which either damps their Spirits, or debaſes their Reputation, they think in quite another way than *French*, *German*, *Flemiſh*, or *Italian* Merchants do. They have as quick Notions of Honour as of Intereſt, and are no leſs concerned

cerned for their Country's being enriched, than for the Increaſe of their private Fortunes. This is one of the great Cauſes of the bright Figure which Trade makes in *London*.

There is another thing peculiar to the Traders in this Country; it is the wiſe and prudent uſe they make of the Riches they acquire. When an *Engliſhman* hath raiſed an Eſtate in Trade, he leaves it off and becomes a Country Gentleman. They are indefatigable for ſome Years in Buſineſs, and then they wiſely and contentedly ſit down and enjoy the Fruit of their Labours. It ſeems as if this Nation alone had preſerved a juſt Senſe of that Equality which Nature meant to eſtabliſh among Men. It is not only the Traders do not ſuffer themſelves to be impoſed upon by the ſwelling Sounds of empty Titles, but the very People behave with proper Moderation in this reſpect, and in their Addreſſes to the Great, ſhew nothing of that Fear and ſlaviſh Admiration which is ſo common in all other Countries.

A Lord here is only reſpected in proportion to the Good he does. If he is a good-natur'd, eaſy, affable and generous Perſon, he is generally eſteemed, and meets with all the Marks of Reſpect he can deſire; which are ſo much the more pleaſing, becauſe he well knows he would not receive them, if they were not due to his Merit. If on the other hand, he has no good Qualities in him, he is looked upon with Indifference, and treated as a uſeleſs Member of Society. He enjoys, it is true, the Privileges due to his Rank, and leads juſt ſuch a Life at *London* as a diſcarded Courtier at *Verſailles*. I muſt tell you farther, my Friend, that an *Engliſh* Nobleman appears to be more mortified on loſing the Regards of his Countrymen than a *Frenchman* ſeems to be when in diſgrace with his Prince.

You will the more readily apprehend this, when I tell you, that a ſtrong Paſſion for Glory, and for the Honour of his Country is predominant in every *Engliſh* Soul.

It is not only in this ſort of Conduct towards the Great, that the meaner ſort of People reſemble the more ſubſtantial. It is the ſame thing with regard to moſt of the good and bad Qualities they poſſeſs: For the *Engliſh* in general being a thinking People, Reaſon and Common Senſe ſupply even in the meaneſt of them, any Defects in their Education.

The Manner in which the People are dreſſed, is a Demonſtration of the Eaſe in which they live. One ſees here an Air of *Abundance*, among even the loweſt People; and it is this extraordinary Plenty which makes the Mob inſolent, and gives that Air of Fierceneſs complained of even in thoſe of ſuperior Rank. Self-conceit is the natural Defect of the Inhabitants of this Country. Whatever Situation of Life they are in, they ſet a high Value upon themſelves; for let them live how they will, *they are ſtill Engliſhmen*, and on this they ground a kind of indelible Title to Reſpect.

I told you in my firſt Letter, that the Virtues and Vices of this Nation, are equally great, and that one ſees in their Characters aſtoniſhing Contradictions: I will now ſupport this Obſervation by Inſtances. The *Engliſh* have a great and noble Spirit; they deteſt Treachery; this Generoſity of theirs will not allow them to ſee Combatants on unequal Terms. If a Man in the Streets of *London* ſhould pretend to cane another who had no Stick in his Hand, he would be mobb'd. But if a Perſon were indiſcreet enough to draw upon a naked Man, the Prentice Boys and Journeymen in the Neighbourhood, would be tempted either to pull him to pieces or throw him into the *Thames*. Such are the

the Effects of this their generous Impetuoſity, which ſeems excuſable on account of the Rectitude of their Intentions. But theſe very People, who can't endure to ſee Men engaged on unequal Terms, reſemble the ancient *Romans* in their liking to Gladiators. Is there not ſomething ſavage in beholding ſuch bloody Spectacles? When they can't ſee Men fight, they divert themſelves at the Expence of Cocks, Dogs and Bulls. This Ferocity of theirs muſt be ſatisfied, and for want of their own Species, they are content to ſacrifice Animals to their Humours.

Who can imagine, that a People ſo cruel and bloody in their Diverſions, are notwithſtanding humane and charitable in the higheſt Degree? There are, however, very few among the *Engliſh*, who, if their Circumſtances allow it, refuſe an Alms to the Poor. Nay, they carry the thing further ſtill; they do not ſtay till they are ask'd, the Sight of Indigence is ſufficient to move them, and from a Motive of Humanity they give, that they may be eaſy in themſelves.

One of the moſt ſingular Differences in the Temper of theſe People is their Contempt of Trifles, and their exceſſive Love of what they call the *Faſhion*. One cannot but be amazed to ſee in the ſame People Sentiments and Inclinations ſo intirely oppoſite. To this Oddity I cannot help joining another, which is perhaps as ſingular, *viz.* their Propenſity to Chicane. When one conſiders the Multitude of Law-ſuits which are daily decided in *London*, and when one reflects on the Prudence and good Senſe which one every where diſcovers in the Books and Diſcourſes of the *Engliſh*, one is tempted to think, that they talk like *Philoſophers*, think like *Pettifoggers*, and act like the *Normans*, from whom, in a great meaſure, their beſt Families are

deſcended. This is certain, that falſe Witneſſes are as plenty here as in *Normandy*. Nay, one would imagine that they had ſome Reſpect for them, and were afraid of deſtroying the Breed; they puniſh them ſo ſlightly in compariſon of what they deſerve, that a Knight of the Poſt in *London* is infinitely a ſafer Employment than a *Janſeniſt* Bookſeller in *Paris*.

As to Religion, every *Engliſhman* has one of his own Cut. If there was a Proclamation to bring in their Creeds, I do verily believe there would not be two alike. But notwithſtanding theſe Variations in Point of Belief, they are incredibly zealous for the particular Sects under the Denomination of which they range themſelves. A *Churchman* hates a *Presbyterian* as heartily as a *Janſeniſt* does a *Jeſuit*. The Presbyterian pays the Churchman in his own Coin, but they unite in deteſting a Papiſt, who has in his Turn a cordial Abhorrence for them both *.

How does ſo whimſical a Behaviour as this agree with the good Senſe of the *Engliſh*, and with that Toleration in Matters of Religion which ſubſiſts among them? One is forced, when one ſpeaks freely, to confeſs that there are a kind of Follies which may be ſtiled national, and that a People ought to be eſteemed wiſe and happy whoſe Weakneſſes are few and favourable. On this Principle, dear *Iſaac*, I cannot help ſaying, that the *Engliſh* are very much indebted to Nature. For amongſt the different Follies with which all Nations are infected, the *Engliſh* have for their Share the lighteſt, and the leaſt dangerous to good Senſe. With theſe ſmall

* *Inde furor vulgi quod numina vicinorum*
Odit quiſque locus; cum ſolos credat habendas
Eſſe Deos, quos ipſe colit. Juv. Sat. xv.

ſmall Faults, they have great and ſhining Virtues. We obſerve amongſt them a Conſtancy which elſewhere paſſes for philoſophick. They have the Courage to declare againſt old Opinions whenever they diſcover them to be erroneous; it ſignifies nothing to tell them that their Fathers thought ſo and ſo, and that they ought to revere the Antiquity of any Opinions. This, I ſay, ſignifies nothing to them; for no ſooner is the Deluſion manifeſt than they aſſert their Right of diſcarding it. It is a common thing to hear an *Engliſhman* ſay, We have play'd the Fool as to ſuch or ſuch a thing theſe two or three hundred Years, it is high time that we ſhould become wiſer, and not put it into the power of our Children to make the ſame Complaints, and with the ſame Juſtice, againſt us, that we do againſt our Forefathers.

It is certainly, dear *Iſaac*, a pleaſing thing to diſcern in a whole Nation a Diſpoſition to make uſe of their Reaſon; and this appears the more extraordinary, when we conſider that moſt other Nations condemn and perſecute ſuch as have the Courage to act in this manner.

Another eſſential Quality in the *Engliſh* is their Neglect of Nicety, or as they call it Finicalneſs. A *Petit-Maitre* at *London* is not more the Jeſt of Men of Senſe than of the meaneſt People. He is regarded by both as a ſort of a Marmot, or any other pretty dancing Animal that's ſhewn at Fairs. You cannot imagine, my Friend, how much I admire this Sagacity. For ſurely, if Cuſtom did not blunt the Underſtandings of other Nations, they would ſee theſe Trifiers in the ſame Light, and be as well pleaſed with their Tricks and Grimaces, as with a Monkey's dancing on the Rope.

The *Engliſh* are commonly charged with Inconſtancy and Fickleneſs. To ſay the truth, their

Hiſtory is a clear and diſtinct Proof of the Inequality of their Behaviour towards their Princes. In order to excuſe this, they pretend that they have never been wanting in their Duty with reſpect to their Sovereigns, but when they were forced to it in order to preſerve their Rights. If this Aſſertion of theirs was founded in truth, one might believe that the Love of Liberty was the Cauſe of their Revolutions. But notwithſtanding all they ſay in extenuation of their Conduct, it is eaſy enough to ſee that this Liberty, of which they talk ſo much, ſerves ſometimes only for a Pretence to cover their Lightneſs and Love of Change. Ambitious Men amongſt them know how to work on the Credulity of the People, and by filling their Minds with falſe Fears upon this Subject, conduct the Motions of popular Fury in ſuch a manner as to lift themſelves into the beſt Places.

To be convinced of the truth of this, one needs only conſider the Revolutions amongſt them, as they themſelves repreſent them. We ſhall ſee that they have happened under Princes of Characters directly oppoſite; whence it is plain, that the Conduct of their Princes was not the true Cauſe. The *Engliſh* were equally diſpleaſed with the ſoft and indolent Behaviour of *Henry* VI. and with the bold and enterprizing Temper of *Edward* IV. depoſing both theſe Princes in their Turns; and by an Effect of the ſame Inconſtancy unknown to every other Nation, they were alike diſpleaſed with the Gallantry and Love of Pleaſure which diſtinguiſhed *Charles* II. and the Capacity and Activity which all the World allowed to *William* III. They caball'd and plotted againſt both with the ſame Obſtinacy, tho' they had ſet each of them upon the Throne with all poſſible Marks of Joy and general Satisfaction.

Theſe Troubles under Kings ſo different in their Maxims of Government, ſhews plainly that the Fault lies in the *Engliſh* Nation, and that which ſtill more clearly proves, that the Rights and Liberties of the Nation are not always in queſtion, is, that Revolutions have happened under Kings, who, inſtead of encroaching upon or violating, have actually conſerved and enlarged their Rights by voluntary Conceſſions. Let us, however, my Friend, acknowledge, that tho' *Engliſh* Sovereigns have not always been in fault, yet have they not on the other hand been always free from blame.

Farewell, dear *Iſaac*, live content and happy.

London.

LETTER CXXXV.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, heretofore a Rabbi at* Conſtantinople.

THE *Engliſh*, dear *Iſaac*, allow their King ſuch a kind of Power as certain Philoſophers attribute to the Deity. The Sovereign, in this Country, may do as much Good as he will, but as for Hurt, that lies pretty much out of his Reach: He may, if he pleaſes, ſpare an Offender's Life, but he can take away the Life of no Man. It is the Law, and the legal Judges only, who have the Power of puniſhing in this Country, where arbitrary Authority can do nothing. The moſt conſiderable Employments, however, are in the King, that is to ſay,

ſay, are in his Gift. He nominates Biſhops, and other dignify'd Clergy. He cannot however remove People from their Offices; that muſt be done in a legal way. While Men in Place are honeſt, act up to their Duty, and are ſtrictly ſpeaking, the Servants of their Country, they have nothing to fear, either from the Inconſtancy or evil Diſpoſition of their Princes, who have an abſolute Power over none but their domeſtick Servants.

The King and the State have their ſeparate Rights. It is an eſtabliſh'd Maxim in *England*, and openly defended by the beſt Lawyers, that the King has two Superiors, *God* and the *Law*, to whom he owes the ſame Reſpect with the meaneſt of his Subjects *.

Is it not true, ſaid an *Engliſhman*, a Friend of mine, to me one day, *that the People were not created to be the Slaves of Princes, and to afford them the cruel Pleaſure of tormenting? He muſt be a Fool who ſhould dare to ſay, that God created one Man to make others miſerable. Since then Kings are appointed not for the Deſtruction, but for the Preſervation of their People, not to do them Evil, but to be their Benefactors, it follows, that like other Men, they muſt be obedient to the Laws made for the common Good of the Society. If indeed, we could be always ſure of having virtuous and wiſe Kings, there would be no need of circumſcribing them within any Bounds, their Probity and Rectitude of Heart would ſufficiently limit them, and anſwer effectually the Intention of theſe ſort of Reſtrictions. But the Throne is too often fill'd with Perſons who ſtand in the utmoſt need of Laws to controul their Wills. How happy had it been for the* Romans, *if in time they had check'd the Cruelties of* Tiberius, Ca-

* Rex in Regno ſuo ſuperiores habet Deum & Legem.

Caligula *and* Nero, *and obliged them to quit their Title to Sovereignty, when they took up the ſcandalous Trade of Tyrants?*

Our Kings, continued my Friend, *enter into a Contract with us; while they obſerve the Conditions of it, they have all imaginable reſpect paid them, they enjoy their Prerogatives in the moſt ample Manner, and are as abſolute in doing good to their People as they can wiſh. It is true, if they forget their Promiſes, they run the Hazard of exciting ſome very dangerous Sedition. But to avoid this, there is no more requiſite than that they ſhould keep their Words, and remember, that at their Coronation they ſwore to obſerve the Laws and to ſee them obſerved. Why ſhould the People be more bound by their Promiſes than their Sovereigns; a King who becomes a Tyrant ſets his Subjects a bad Example, and teaches them by his own Conduct, to make light of the moſt ſacred and ſolemn Agreements. But it may be ſaid, that our Lives and Fortunes depend upon our Princes. True, and we ought to ſacrifice both in their Quarrels, if they are wiſe and juſt. Inaſmuch as they are the Fathers of their Subjects, we ought to behave towards them with filial Piety. But ſuch a Submiſſion can only be expected while that reciprocal Relation ſubſiſts whence it naturally ariſes.*

If Kings are above the Laws, and if they may diſpenſe with them when they think fit, to what Purpoſe do they promiſe that they will obſerve certain Rules? All that they do upon this head, and all the Aſſurances that they give are only Mummeries. When a Prince is crown'd, and there ſolemnly ſwears to obſerve certain Rules, we ought, it ſeems, to look upon this ſwearing as a mere neceſſary Form in the Ceremony, not to be omitted for the Sake of Decency, tho' in Fact it is uſeleſs, and ſerves only to ſhew that there were Freemen in times paſt, but that all who live now are

Slaves.

Slaves. There is no body quite ſo mad as poſitively to aſſert this; the moſt zealous Defenders of arbitrary Power acknowledge, that a Sovereign ought to keep his Promiſes, and yet abſurdly, and beyond all Comprehenſion, they conclude that they may violate them with Impunity.

I muſt confeſs, my dear *Iſaac*, that what this *Engliſhman* ſaid to me ſeemed very plauſible. In effect, it appears reaſonable, that if we aſſert Kings are bound by their Promiſes, we ſhould alſo admit, that it is lawful to diſobey them when they break their Words; for it ſeems to be a neceſſary Conſequence of the mutual Engagements between Sovereigns and their People, that they ſhould no longer ſubſiſt when thoſe Conditions are wanting, for the ſake of which it was agreed, that this Diſtinction of Sovereign and Subject ſhould take place. Now it cannot be denied that ſuch as have written with the greateſt Warmth againſt Sedition, have poſitively aſſerted that Princes could not violate their Contracts with their People, without being guilty of Injuſtice. "It muſt be allowed, ſays "the famous *Grotius* *, that when Princes under- "take to govern by certain Rules, their Sove- "reignty is in ſome Degree limited and reſtrained; "whether thoſe Obligations regard barely the Ex- "erciſe of their Power, or directly, and in the "firſt Inſtance, affect the Power in their hands. "In the firſt Caſe, whatever they do contrary to "their Promiſe being an Act of Injuſtice, every "Pro-

* *Fatendum tamen id ubi ſit arctius quodammodo reddi imperium, ſive obligatio duntaxat cadat in exercitium actus, ſive etiam directè in ipſam facultatem. Priore ſpecie, actus contra promiſſum factus erit injuſtus, quia ..... vera promiſſio jus dat ei, cui promittitur. Altera autem ſpecie erit etiam nullus defectu facultatis.* Hugo Grotius, de Jure Belli & Pacis, tom. i. p. 121.

" Promiſe veſting a Right in thoſe to whom the " Promiſe is made. In the other Caſe, the Act is " unjuſt and void at the ſame time, for want of a " legal Power to ſupport it."

Behold, my dear *Iſaac*, a preciſe Deciſion by an Author whoſe Character is above Suſpicion. But he explains himſelf ſtill more clearly in another place, wherein he ſeems to have forgot his own Syſtem. " Now, if it be demanded, ſays he, what " will happen if this Clauſe be added to the Con- " tract, that in caſe the King breaks his Word, " he ſhall forfeit his Title to the Crown? I anſwer, " that even in this caſe the Power of the King does " not ceaſe to be abſolute, but that he holds his " Power as it were for a time *.

It ſeems to me, *Iſaac*, that our Author could not well ſay more againſt arbitrary Power, and the violating Subjects Rights with Impunity. *Grotius*, however, paſſes for an Author directly oppoſite in Sentiments to the Anti-Royaliſts. And tho' it may be ſaid in his favour, that there is no Contract between Sovereigns and Subjects, wherein it is expreſly ſtipulated, that the Forfeiture of their Crowns ſhall attend the breaking of their Words, yet it is too feeble to deſtroy what he before advanced. For tho' in theſe Engagements between Subjects and Kings it be not declared, that by the Violation of the Contract the Prince ſhall loſe his Rights, ſuch a Clauſe is nevertheleſs tacitly comprehended in them, becauſe this Contract cannot be relied on, if the People did not reſerve to themſelves ſuch a Power to enforce it. Without this, ſuch

* *Quid ſi addatur ſi Rex fidem fallat, ut tum Regno cadat? Ne ſi quidem Imperium deſinet eſſe ſummum, ſed erit habendi imminutus per Conditionem & Imperium temporario non abſimile.* Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis, p. 125.

ſuch Engagements would be fruitleſs; for tho' they might ſerve to bind Subjects to their Prince, yet it muſt be to ſuch a Prince as could not bind himſelf in return. With reſpect to all ſuch Conditions, they muſt either be real and effectual, or vain and uſeleſs. But the univerſal Opinion is, that they are real, and that both Parties are bound to obſerve them. Well then, both Parties muſt reſerve a Right of forcing the Obſervation, and therefore, tho' it be not ſpecified in the Engagements, that Princes when they break them loſe their Authority, yet this Clauſe ſeems neceſſary to the Validity and the Security of the Contract.

Theſe Reaſons, dear *Iſaac*, ſeem very ſtrong againſt ſuch as maintain that it is not lawful to take Arms againſt our Prince. I muſt own to you, however, that I am thoroughly perſuaded the People have no Right to dethrone their Sovereign; I go ſtill farther, for I am of Opinion, that if they had ſuch a Power, the Abuſe of it would bring upon them the greateſt Miſeries.

When we compare the Compacts between Sovereigns and their Subjects to thoſe between private Men, we run into a very great Error. We ought to diſtinguiſh between the Promiſes of Kings, and thoſe of their Subjects; the latter may be compell'd to the Performance of their Promiſes by a temporal Power, becauſe they are ſubject to Men, but Princes being accountable only to God, are not under the ſame Predicament. The Engagements into which they enter with their People are not however uſeleſs, becauſe they cannot be compell'd to adhere to them, in as much as they are binding before God, and in that Light Checks to their Wills.

Reaſon, and the Publick Tranquillity may both be urged to eſtabliſh this Doctrine. For if it be admitted,

mitted, that under a Pretence of violating the Laws, Princes may be dethroned, to what Miſchiefs and Inconveniencies would all Governments be expoſed? The People inconſtant, whimſical, wholly inclined to change, would be ſubject to all Impreſſions, and be at all times ready to revolt. Reſtleſs and unquiet Spirits will always find ſpecious Pretexts to excuſe theſe Seditions and Troubles, ſo in the end Peace would be loſt. " I acknowledge, ſays *Gro-*
" *tius* *, that Kings are eſtabliſhed to no other
" end than that they might adminiſter Juſtice to
" their Subjects; but it does not follow from hence,
" that the People are above their Kings. Guardi-
" ans are aſſigned without doubt for the Good of
" their Pupils, and yet this Truſt gives a Power to
" the Guardian over his Ward. I know it will be
" ſaid, that a Guardian who is guilty of Male-ad-
" miniſtration may be diſcharged from his Truſt,
" from whence ſome would conclude, that the
" People have the ſame Right with reſpect to the
" Prince. But the Caſe is very different; for the
" Guardian hath a Superior on whom he depends,
" whereas the Prince has none. As in finite
" things there cannot be an infinite Progreſſion, ſo
" it is abſolutely neceſſary to ſtop at him, or in Re-
" publicks

* *Verum eſſe poſt Herodotum, Herodotus poſt Hæſiodum dixit fruendæ Juſticiæ cauſâ Reges conſtitutos. Sed non ideo conſequens eſt quod illi inſerunt Populos Reges eſſe ſuperiores: nam & Tutela Pupilli cauſâ reperta eſt, & tamen Tutela jus eſt ac poteſtas in pupillum. Nec eſt quod inſtet aliquis Tutelam ſi male rem pupillarem adminiſtret amoveri poſſe, quare & in rege idem jus eſſe debere; nam in Tutore hoc procedit qui ſuperiorem habet; at in Imperiis quia progreſſus in infinitum non datur, omnino in aliquâ aut perſona aut cœtu conſtituendum eſt quorum peccata, quia ſuperiorem ſe judicem non habent, Deus ſibi curæ peculiari eſſe teſtatior.* Hugo Grotius, ubi ſupra tom. 1. p. 106.

" publicks at a Senate independent of all other " Powers except God."

If we attentively conſider theſe Reaſons, it is impoſſible, my Friend, that we ſhould not yield to them, and agree that in Contracts between Subjects and Sovereigns, Reaſon and the publick Good require, that Heaven only ſhould judge of the Infractions of which the latter are guilty.

Thoſe who take upon themſelves the Characters of Advocates for the Rights of the People, fancy that the Reſpect we alledge due to Princes, is the mere effect of Prejudice, which we want Spirit enough to get over. But in this they are deceived, and it is eaſy to prove the contrary from the Examples of many great Men, who, tho' born under a Republick, exceſſively jealous of its Liberty, have nevertheleſs maintained, that it never can be lawful to take up Arms againſt Sovereigns, whatever Faults they commit. " We muſt, ſays an illuſtri- " ous *Roman*, bear the Luxury or Avarice of our " Governors as we do dear Years, Storms, and o- " ther Irregularities in Nature. There will be " Vices as long as there are Men, but the Miſchiefs " flowing from them are neither conſtant nor per- " petual; on the contrary, there are times, in " which we are indemnified for theſe Miſchiefs by " the Benefits we receive *."

Is it poſſible, my Friend, to ſay, that a Man brought up in the midſt of *Rome*, and who had imbibed from his tender Youth Republican Principles, ſhould be perſuaded that great Reſpect is due even to bad Princes through any ſort of Prejudice?

I

* *Quomodo ſterilitatem aut nimios imbres & cætera naturæ mala, ita luxum & avaritiam Dominantium tolerate. Vitia erunt donec Homines, ſed neque hæc continua & meliorum interventu penſantur.* Tit. Liv. Hiſt. lib. iv. cap. lxxiv. num. 4.

I cannot believe that any Man living would advance ſuch an Abſurdity.

Fare thee well, *Iſaac*, may the God of our Fathers give thee continual Proſperity.

London.

LETTER CXXXVI.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, heretofore a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

MEN of Quality in this Country are as little attach'd to the Court, as the meaner ſort of People are to them. For as the People ſhew no Reſpect to a Lord farther than his Virtues and good Qualities demand, ſo the Nobility in general adhere to the Court only ſo long as it appears to have no Deſigns contrary to the Welfare of the People.

One thing, dear *Iſaac*, is very extraordinary in *England*, and that is, to obſerve a ſincere Love for their Country, in Men whoſe Employments oblige them to be about the Court. In all other Countries, Courtier and Slave are ſynonimous Terms; and with Reaſon, the Vices of Princes being as much adored by ſuch Men as their Perſons. But here, the Virtue and Probity of the Prince attracts Veneration; when they diſcern in their Sovereign any Faults which may be prejudicial to their Country, inſtead of flattering his Defects, they provide the beſt they can againſt it.

This

This Grandeur of Soul is the natural Conſequence of the thinking Diſpoſition of the *Engliſh*, who, generally ſpeaking, decline Employments, and content themſelves with the Pleaſures of a private and retired Life. In *France* all the Gentlemen are naturally attached to the Court, even ſuch as live in the Provinces are ſo accuſtomed to enjoy little Employments, that without them they cannot believe themſelves happy, or in a Situation worthy of their Birth. Among them the Love of their Country is a mere Chimæra. What ſignifies the Misfortunes of their Countrymen to them, if they can but have the Pleaſure of arriving, ſome Way or other, at an Employment which puts it in their power to revenge themſelves upon ſuch as have ſlighted, maltreated or injured them, while they were yet but private Men? The *Engliſh* think quite otherwiſe; there is not a Man amongſt them who has any Ambition to be the firſt Slave. The Character of Independency appears more elevated to them than that ſhining Servitude which charms moſt Men in the other Courts of *Europe*. In this Country there are many private Men, who would refuſe even the higheſt Poſts of Honour, if they were to be attended with the Loſs of Freedom of Sentiment, and that Liberty of Action which is their Delight.

It is in *England*, my dear *Iſaac*, where it may be ſaid, that Truth is carried even to the Throne, and appears there with Luſtre. Happy the Nation ſince this Cuſtom hath been introduced! The Prince too hath found his Advantage therefrom, by being delivered from thoſe Errors into which Inattention or his Paſſions betrayed him, by Repreſentations prudent and ſincere. No Monarch ever repented of his liſtening to the Advice of thoſe who ſet his Faults before him freely and truly, whereas many

many Kings have been miſled, not a few totally deſtroyed by liſtening to baſe Flatteries. *There is no Condition of Life*, ſays *Montaigne*, *which ſtands in need of more free and ſmart Advertiſements than that of Sovereign Authority.* —— *Kings frequently find themſelves, before they are aware, engaged in the Hatred and Deſtruction of their People, by Steps they might have eaſily avoided.* —— *Generally ſpeaking, Favourites look more to their own Affairs than to thoſe of their Maſters; and in ſome meaſure they are in the right. For to ſpeak the truth, the Liberties of a true Friendſhip are rude and perilous Attempts when exerciſed towards a Prince* †.

It is to themſelves, my Friend, that Courtiers owe this unlucky Situation, which *Montaigne* ſo well deſcribes, *the Liberties of a true Friendſhip are rude and perilous Attempts when exerciſed towards a Prince.* If they all thought as the *Engliſh* do, they would never bring themſelves to ſuch a Paſs as not to dare to exerciſe their Reaſon, and to look upon Truth as a dangerous and impracticable Virtue. They would by this means have preſerved a Right of being uſeful to their Maſters, inſtead of encouraging their Faults, by treating them as ſo many excellent Qualities.

The ſame good Senſe which hinders Courtiers and Men of Quality from being Slaves in *England* to the Superior Dignity of their Prince, teaches them alſo how to ſupport their own Quality, without ſuffering their Grandeur to turn their Heads. We very rarely ſee here Men magnificently dreſs'd aſſuming high Airs of State, ſpeaking in an elevated Tone, talking everlaſtingly of their Birth, their Dependents, their Horſes, ſtrutting a tiptoe, hoiſting their Shoulders up, taking Snuff, adjuſting their Perukes, and then deciding peremptorily, and with the

† *Montaigne*'s Eſſays, Book III.

the Air of an Oracle on Things of the utmoſt Importance, ſmiling or ſinging while one is talking to them, and ſeldom deigning to make an Anſwer in more than two Words. A Man of this Character, I ſay, is not commonly met with at *London*; and when he is, theſe affected Airs which would make him ſeem ſomebody in another place, render him here hateful to the Populace, and ridiculous to his Equals.

Ignorance is a Vice which has very few Partizans in this Country, even among Men of Quality. Inſtead of bluſhing at a ſtrict Application to the Sciences, they ſhew the utmoſt Contempt for ſuch as conceive it a declining the Privilege of Nobility to trouble themſelves with more Knowledge than that of being able to read tolerably and write a common Letter. In more Countries than one, a Man that with a certain Air can ſay a pleaſant thing, is look'd upon as a fine Fellow, in *England* he would be ſtiled a Blockhead without Mercy, becauſe there Things receive their Value from their Worth; a Lord who can ſing and talk Nonſenſe to a Woman, is in that Country a Coxcomb. He who has theſe Phraſes everlaſtingly in his Mouth, *A Man of my Quality*, *a Perſon of my Birth*, is laughed at and derided. Had he all the Quality of the *Venetian* Senate put together, and nothing elſe to recommend him, he would meet but little Eſteem at *London*.

It is in that Country abſolutely neceſſary to have Merit in order to have Credit. Nobility has indeed Privileges, but thoſe Privileges are merely honorary. A Lord who is incapable of diſtinguiſhing himſelf by his Parts, muſt conſole himſelf with them as well as he can. A *Swiſs* Author introduces a Lord deſcribing his own Situation very emphatically, that is, ſuch a Lord as hath nothing but what he derives

rives from his Birth. *It is true*, ſays he, *we cannot be arreſted for our Debts, but then it is but here and there we can find credit. Inſtead of an Oath, we ſay upon our Honours; but to ballance this we are ſeldom believed: there is indeed a Law to prevent People from ſpeaking ill of us; but if his Lordſhip is too buſy with his Cane, his Lordſhip may be beat* *. It is true, dear *Iſaac*, all this muſt not be literally taken, but however, it is ſufficient to ſhew, that in *England*, how great ſoever a Man's Quality is, he muſt have Merit alſo to render him conſiderable. You need not therefore be ſurprized at ſeeing more Men of Quality Patrons of the Sciences in this Country than elſewhere; Ambition and the Deſire of Glory excite in them quite different Paſſions than are felt by Men of their Rank in other Countries, where their Heads are turn'd to other Things. A *Frenchman* thinks himſelf illuſtrious enough in right of his Coaches, Horſes, Domeſticks, Furniture and fine Clothes; an *Engliſhman* admits, that theſe have nothing to do with Merit, and that all theſe Trifles do not contribute to raiſe his Character in the leaſt.

There is yet another Reaſon which forces People of Diſtinction in this Country to cultivate Sciences and the *Belles Lettres*. It is the Neceſſity they are under of underſtanding ancient and modern Policies, which is a kind of Knowledge for which they find frequent occaſion. Not only Lords, but all Men of ſuch a Rank as hope for any Employments, are obliged to be well verſed in Hiſtory and Politicks. *In England*, ſays an illuſtrious Author, *Men commonly think, and Learning is even in greater Credit there than here. This Advantage is the natural Conſequence of their Form of Government; there are in*

* Mural't's *Letters on the Engliſh Nation.*

in London *near ſeven or eight hundred Perſons who have a Right to ſpeak in publick, and to ſupport the Intereſt of the Nation. At leaſt, five or ſix thouſand pretend to this Honour in their Turns. All the reſt pretend to judge of the Behaviour of this People. Every Man may print what he thinks fit on publick Affairs. Thus the whole Nation is under a Neceſſity of knowing more than any other Nation. One hears nothing talk'd of but the Government of* Rome *and* Athens. *A Man is forced, whether he will or will not, to read the Authors who treat of theſe Things; this Study naturally leads a Man to the* Belles Lettres. *In ſhort, every Man is a ſort of a Stateſman. How comes it, that our Magiſtrates, our Lawyers, our Phyſicians, our Eccleſiaſticks, have more Learning, a better Taſte, and a greater Share of Wit than the reſt of the* French *Nation? Is it not truly, becauſe their Condition of Life requires a greater Cultivation of the Mind* *.

See then, dear *Iſaac*, the eſſential Cauſe of the difference there is between *Engliſh* and *French* Courtiers. The firſt need nothing to recommend them but Patience, Suppleneſs, and a little Court-Craft. On the contrary, the latter cannot ſucceed but in right of ſuperior Knowledge, good Senſe and requiſite Learning; theſe, and theſe only, being the Arts by which Rivals are to be overcome.

Before I finiſh my Letter, I muſt take notice to you, dear *Iſaac*, of one of the Privileges of the Nobility in this Country. Whoever ventures to libel them is liable to ſuffer deeply in his Pocket. This is ſettled by an expreſs Law †; and I have been told on this Subject a whimſical Story: The Son of a rich Inn-keeper having been lucky enough to pleaſe the Wife of a Man of Quality, did not apprehend that this

* Voltair's *Letters, Lett.* xx.

† He means the Action of *Scandalum Magnatum.*

this Law could prove any Bar to his Endeavours in this way. He had the good Luck to ſucceed in his Amour, and the Lord had the good Luck, if it can be ſo called, to find it out; upon which he uſed means to procure a Divorce, but failing of the neceſſary Proof in the proper Court, he was forced to content himſelf with recovering Damages againſt the Inn-keeper's Son: Since this Affair it is a ſettled Point, that a Man fails in his reſpect to the Nobility, when he becomes too agreeable to their Wives. However, there are ſome arch People who ſcruple not to ſay, that there are ſprightly Fellows who will ogle Women of Quality, tho' at the Hazard of their Fortunes. If the Men of Title in *Italy* had any Privilege of this ſort, I dare ſay they would be as tender of it as the *Engliſh* are of their Liberty. *

Adieu, dear *Iſaac*, may the God of our Fathers cover thee with Bleſſings.

London.

* *Our Author hath been not a little miſtaken in this Matter, which is only the Story of the D. of* N. *ſuing Sir* John Germaine, *who was an Inn-keeper's Son at the* Hague, *not on the Statute of* Scan. Mag. *but on an Action of the* Caſe, *for criminal Converſation with his Dutcheſs.*

LETTER CXXXVII.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

I Have read, my dear *Iſaac*, the Relation of a Prodigy inſerted in an * hiſtorical Journal, and I find in it ſome Things ſo particular, that I perſuade myſelf you will concur with me in Opinion, that the Facts contained therein are abſolutely irreconcileable to Philoſophic Speculations, and all the Efforts of the reaſoning Faculty. I will firſt give you a faithful Extract of what I have read, and then my ſincere Opinion of the ſupernatural Things therein contained.

" We have had in this Country a new Scene of " Vampiriſm, which is duly atteſted by two Officers " of the Tribunal of *Belgrade*, who took Cogni- " zance of the Affair on the Spot, and by an Officer " in his Imperial Majeſty's Troops at *Gradiſch* (in " *Sclavonia*) who was an Eye-witneſs of the Pro- " ceedings,

" In the Beginning of *September* there died at " the Village of *Kiſilova*, three Leagues from *Gra-* " *diſch*, an old Man of above threeſcore and two: " three Days after he was buried he appeared in " the Night to his Son, and deſired he would give " him ſomewhat to eat. The Son did ſo, the " Father eat, and then diſappeared. The next

* *Mercure Hiſtorique et Politique*, Octob. 1736. *p.* 403—411.

" Day

" Day the Son told his Neighbours theſe Particu-
" lars. That Night the Father did not come, but
" the next Evening he made him another Viſit,
" and deſired ſomething to eat. It is not known
" whether his Son gave him any Thing or
" not, but the next Morning the young Man
" was found dead in his Bed. The Magi-
" ſtrate or Bailiff of the Place had Notice of
" this, as alſo that the ſame Day five or ſix Per-
" ſons fell ſick in the Village, and died one after
" the other. He ſent an exact Account of this to
" the Tribunal of *Belgrade*, and thereupon two
" Commiſſioners were diſpatched to the Village at-
" tended by an Executioner, with Inſtructions to
" examine cloſely into the Affair. An Officer in
" the Imperial Service, from whom we have this
" Relation, went alſo from *Gradiſch*, in order to
" examine perſonally an Affair of which he had
" heard ſo much. They opened in the firſt place
" the Graves of all who had been buried in ſix
" Weeks. When they came to that of the old
" Man, they found his Eyes open, his Colour
" freſh, his Reſpiration quick and ſtrong, yet he
" appeared to be ſtiff and inſenſible. From theſe
" Signs they concluded him to be a notorious *Vam-*
" *pire*. The Executioner thereupon by the Com-
" mand of the Commiſſioners ſtruck a Stake thro'
" his Heart ; and when they had ſo done, they
" made a Bonfire, and therein conſumed the Car-
" caſs to Aſhes. There was no Marks of Vam-
" piriſm found on his Son, or on the Bodies of the
" other Perſons who died ſo ſuddenly.

" Thanks be to God, we are as far as any
" People can be from giving into Credulity, we
" acknowledge that all the Lights of Phyſick do
" not enable us to give any Account of this Fact,
" nor do we pretend to enter into its Cauſes.
" However, we cannot avoid giving Credit to a

" Matter of Fact juridically atteſted by compe-
" tent and unſuſpected Witneſſes, eſpecially ſince
" it is far from being the only one of the kind.
" We ſhall here annex an Inſtance of the ſame ſort
" in 1732, already inſerted in the *Gleaner*, No. 18.

" In a certain Canton of *Hungary*, which is cal-
" led in Latin *Oppida Heidonum*, on the other Side
" the *Tibiſcus*, vulgarly called the *Teyſſe*; that is
" to ſay, the River which waſhes the celebrated
" Territory of *Tokay*, as alſo a Part of *Tranſilvania*.
" The People known by the Name of *Heydukes* be-
" lieve that certain dead Perſons, whom they call
" Vampires, ſuck the Blood of the Living, inſo-
" much that theſe People appear like Skeletons,
" while the dead Bodies of the Suckers are ſo full
" of Blood, that it runs out at all the Paſſages of
" their Bodies, and even at their very Pores.
" This odd Opinion of theirs they ſupport by a
" Multitude of Facts atteſted in ſuch a Manner,
" that they leave no room for doubt. We ſhall
" here mention ſome of the moſt conſiderable.

" It is now about five Years ago, that a cer-
" tain Heyduke an Inhabitant of the Village of
" *Medreiga*, whoſe Name was *Arnold Paul*, was
" bruis'd to Death by a Hay-Cart, which ran over
" him. Thirty Days after his Death, no leſs
" than four Perſons died ſuddenly, in that manner
" wherein, according to the Tradition of the
" Country, thoſe People generally die who are
" ſuck'd by Vampires. Upon this a Story was
" called to mind, that this *Arnold Paul* had told
" in his Life-time, *viz.*, that at *Coſſova* on the
" Frontiers of the *Turkiſh Servia*, he had been tor-
" mented by a Vampire; (now the eſtabliſhed O-
" pinion is, that a Perſon ſuck'd by a Vampire,
" becomes a Vampire himſelf, and ſucks in his
" Turn,) But that he had found a way to rid
him.

" himſelf of this Evil, by eating ſome of the Earth
" out of the Vampire's Grave, and rubbing him-
" ſelf with his Blood. This Precaution however
" did not hinder his becoming a Vampire; inſo-
" much that his Body being taken up forty Days
" after his Death, all the Marks of a notorious
" Vampire were found thereon. His Complexion
" was freſh, his Hair, Nails, and Beard were
" grown; he was full of fluid Blood, which ran
" from all Parts of his Body upon his Shroud. The
" *Hadnagy* or *Bailiff* of the Place, who was pre-
" ſent at the taking of him up, and who was a
" Perſon well acquainted with Vampiriſm, cauſed
" a ſharp Stake to be thruſt, as the Cuſtom is,
" through the Heart of *Arnold Paul*, and alſo
" quite through his Body; whereupon he cried out
" dreadfully as if he had been alive. This done,
" they cut off his Head, burnt his Body, and
" threw the Aſhes thereof into the *Saave*. They
" took the ſame Meaſures with the Bodies of thoſe
" Perſons who had died of Vampiriſm, for fear
" that they ſhould fall to ſucking in their Turns.

" All theſe prudent Steps did not hinder the
" ſame Miſchief from breaking out again about
" five Years afterwards, when ſeveral People in
" the ſame Village died in a very odd manner.
" In the ſpace of three Months, ſeventeen Perſons
" of all Ages and Sexes died of Vampiriſm, ſome
" ſuddenly, and ſome after two or three Days ſuf-
" fering. Amongſt others there was one *Stano-
" ska*, the Daughter of a Heyduke, whoſe Name
" was *Jovitzo*, who going to Bed in perfect Health,
" waked in the middle of the Night, and making
" a terrible Outcry, affirmed that the Son of a cer-
" tain Heyduke whoſe Name was *Millo*, and who
" had been dead about three Weeks, had attemp-
" ted to ſtrangle her in her Sleep. She continued

" from that time in a languiſhing Condition, and
" in the Space of three Days died. What this
" Girl had ſaid, diſcovered the Son of *Millo* to be
" a Vampire. They took up the Body, and found
" him ſo in effect. The principal Perſons of the
" Place, particularly the Phyſician and Surgeons,
" began to examine very narrowly, how, in ſpite
" of all their Precautions, Vampiriſm had again
" broke out in ſo terrible a manner. After a
" ſtrict Inquiſition, they found that the deceaſed
" *Arnold Paul* had not only ſuck'd the four Per-
" ſons before mentioned, but likewiſe ſeveral
" Beaſts, of whom the new Vampires had eaten,
" particularly the Son of *Millo*. Induced by theſe
" Circumſtances, they took a Reſolution, of dig-
" ging up the Bodies of all Perſons who had died
" within a certain time. They did ſo, and a-
" mongſt forty Bodies, there were found ſeven-
" teen evidently Vampires. Through the Hearts
" of theſe they drove Stakes, cut off their Heads,
" burnt the Bodies, and threw the Aſhes into the
" River. All the Informations we have been
" ſpeaking of were taken in a legal way, and all
" the Executions were alſo ſo perſormed, as ap-
" pears by Certificates drawn up in full Form, at-
" teſted by ſeveral Officers in the neigbouring
" Garriſons, by the Surgeons of ſeveral Regiments,
" and the principal Inhabitants of the Place. The
" verbal Proceſs was ſent towards the latter End
" of laſt *January* to the Council of War at *Vi-*
" *enna*, who thereupon eſtabliſhed a ſpecial Com-
" miſſion to examine into theſe Facts. Thoſe juſt
" now mentioned were atteſted by the Hadnagi
" *Barriarar*, the principal Heyduke of the Vil-
" lage, as alſo by *Battuer*, firſt Lieutenant of
" Prince *Alexander* of *Wirtemberg*, *Flickſtenger*,
" Surgeon Major of the Regiment of *Furſtemberg*,

" three

" three other Surgeons of the ſame Regiment, and " ſeveral other Perſons."

I thought proper, my dear *Iſaac*, to lay before you all the ſtrange Stories that have been related of Vampires, that you might the better judge of the Matter, and that the Circumſtances of one Story might ſerve to enlighten another. I ſhall impatiently expect your Sentiments, and in the mean time ſhall give you my own freely.

There are two different Methods whereby the Falſity of this Opinion, that dead Perſons can return and ſuck the living may be demonſtrated; that is to ſay, the Fact may be ſhewn to be impoſſible. Firſt, by explaining by the means of phyſical Cauſes all that is attributed to Vampiriſm, and ſecondly, by denying totally the Truth of theſe Stories, which I take to be the ſafeſt and wiſeſt way. But inaſmuch as the Names of the Perſons who have ſigned this Relation give ſuch an Authority thereto, as ſerves to render it credible; I ſhall, before I proceed to ſhew how little Reſpect is due to theſe Authorities in Philoſophical Matters, admit that ſeveral Perſons have died of that Malady, which is called Vampiriſm.

I lay this down as a Principle, that it is poſſible to find Bodies, which after having been ſome Days interred, have fluid Blood in their Veins; I likewiſe aſſert that it is an eaſy Matter for People to fancy that they have been ſucked by Vampires, and ſo to terrify themſelves by theſe Apprehenſions, as in a ſhort time to die of Fright: for having their Heads full all Day of theſe ſtrange Stories, what Wonder is it, if at Night, and in their Dreams, theſe Ideas ſhould ſtill diſturb their Imagination, and produce that Effect which Terror often produces, immediate or conſequential Death? How often have we ſeen Perſons die away on the News

of ſome terrible Misfortune? How frequently has even exceſſive Joy produced the ſame Effect?

In examining the Story of the Death of theſe pretended Martyrs to Vampiriſm, I diſcover all the Marks of an epidemic Fanaticiſm, and I ſee clearly that the Impreſſions of their own Fears was the true Cauſe of their Deſtruction. Mark the Story of the Heyduke's Daughter; ſhe went to Bed well, awakened in the middle of the Night, cry'd out that ſhe had been attack'd by a Vampire, named a certain dead Perſon ſhe had been thinking of, continued in a languiſhing Condition for ſome Days, and then died. Whoever has Eyes, and ever ſo little Notion of Philoſophy, will eaſily diſcern that this pretended Vampiriſm is the pure Effects of a heated Imagination. Here is a Girl who, by her crying out, pretends to have avoided being ſuck'd by a Vampire; certain it is that ſhe eſcaped the three other Nights, when to be ſure there were People who ſat up with her. Is not this a clear and demonſtrative Proof, that ſhe did not die of Vampiriſm, but of Terror, Apprehenſion and Melancholy?

Thoſe who have been in Places afflicted with the Plague, know by Experience what ſtrange Conſequences Fear can produce. The Moment a Man is a little out of Order, he takes it for granted that he is ſtruck with the epidemick Malady, and this alarms him ſo much, that 'tis ten to one if he eſcapes. The Chevalier *de Maiſin* told me at *Paris*, that being at *Marſeilles* when the Plague raged there, he actually knew an Inſtance of a Woman's dying with Fear on her Maid's being ſeized with an Ague, which ſhe took for the Plague. This Woman's Daughter alſo fell into a mortal Illneſs from the ſame Cauſe. Two other Perſons in the ſame Houſe took their Beds, ſent for a Phyſician,

and

and told him they had the Plague. The ſame Phyſician viſited the Maid-Servant, and the reſt of the Perſons who were ſick, and aſſured them that none of them had the Plague, adviſed them to riſe, to go about the Houſe, and to live as they were wont, and not to frighten themſelves. But with reſpect to the Miſtreſs of the Family, his Care was all in vain, for in the ſpace of two Days, as I have told you, ſhe died of mere Apprehenſion.

Let me now, my Friend, examine the firſt Relation, That of the young Man who died by being ſuck'd by his dead Father; be pleaſed to conſider the Circumſtances, and you will ſee that he died in truth of Fear, of Folly, or of the Vapours. The Story he told his Neighbours the firſt Morning, is a Proof that his Imagination was diſturbed, and that he was exceſſively frighted. This firſt Attack of his ill-grounded Fear, ſerved to diſtemper his Reaſon, and to render him leſs able to reſiſt the next Return of his Pannick. Accordingly, when it did ſurprize him, it produced the Effect which might naturally be expected; it overcame his animal Spirits, and deprived him of Life. You will take Notice, my dear *Iſaac*, that this did not happen the next Night, very probably for this Reaſon, becauſe his Neighbours watched with him, and thereby kept up his Courage; or in other Words parry'd the Attack.

I come next to ſpeak of the dead Bodies which were found full of Blood, their Beards, Nails, and Hair of their Heads grown, and all the other Circumſtances. Of all theſe ſtrange Things, if we admit the Truth of any part, we ſhall be as complaiſant as can be expected; for to be ſure the greateſt part of the Circumſtances were pure Imagination. All Philoſophers know how ready the

People in general are, and even what a Propenſity there is in ſome Hiſtorians to magnify whatever has the Air of being ſupernatural. However, not to inſiſt too much upon this, it is far from being impoſſible to account phyſically for theſe Circumſtances.

Experience teaches us, that there are certain Earths which have a Property of preſerving Bodies put into them for a long Time as freſh as when they were put into the Ground. The Reaſons of which have been ſo often ſtated, that it would be tedious, and at the ſame time needleſs in me to repeat them. At *Thouloufe* there is a Vault belonging to the Church of a Monaſtery, where dead Bodies remain ſo entire, that even after two hundred Years Continuance there, they ſeem as freſh as when firſt buried; they ſet them againſt the Wall in their ordinary Clothes, and they look as if they were alive. What is ſtill more extraordinary, Bodies buried on the other Side of the Vault, become Food for Worms in a Day or two at moſt.

As to the growing of the Nails, the Hair, and the Beard, the ſame Thing is frequently obſerved in dead Bodies in all places. So long as there remains any Moiſture in the Body, we need not be ſurprized if thoſe Parts grow which require only Moiſture to ſupply them.

The Fluidneſs of the Blood, and its being found liquid in the Veins, ſeems the greateſt Difficulty; and yet even this may be ſo well accounted for by phyſical Cauſes, as to ſhut out all Neceſſity of having recourſe to Miracles. With reſpect to this, I ſay, that the Heat of the Sun rarifying the nitrous Damps in the Graves, where the Bodies lie, enables thereby many of thoſe nitrous Particles to inſinuate themſelves into the Body, where entering the Blood,

Blood, and cauſing a Fermentation, they may diſſolve that *Coagulum* occaſioned by Death, and make it by degrees, not flow indeed, but become liquid in the Veins. This is the more probable, becauſe ſomething like it may be performed by a very eaſy Experiment. For if we boil in a Pipkin two Parts of Milk, with one of Oil of Tartar, the Liquor will become red, becauſe the Salts in the Tartar diſſolve the oily Parts in the Milk, and turn it into a kind of Blood; it is true that Blood is naturally of a more florid Colour, but it differs very little in Conſiſtence. There is therefore nothing impoſſible in this Suppoſition, that the Juices in the dead Body by nitrous Particles fermenting with them, may furniſh a Liquor nearly reſembling Blood; eſpecially if we conſider that theſe Juices in their natural State are very oily, and conſequently muſt by ſuch a Fermentation be of a very high Colour.

You ſee, dear *Iſaac*, that without abſolutely denying every particular in the Certificates, it is very poſſible to rid ourſelves of the ſtrangeſt Circumſtances in theſe Stories. To ſay the Truth, it would be ridiculous to give any Credit to them, however atteſted: For either theſe Vampires actually go out to ſuck, or they do not. If they go out, then they muſt be viſible, or they muſt be inviſible, as it ſhould ſeem they are; for upon coming to the Aſſiſtance of thoſe who cry out, there is nothing to be ſeen. It follows then that the Bodies do not go out. This Point being gained, we muſt ſuppoſe that it is the Soul. Now the Soul is either ſpiritual, or compoſed of a very ſubtile Matter; Shall we ſuppoſe then, that in this ſubtile Matter the Blood is carried to the Grave, and there poured into the Body? Is not this ſending the Soul of a ſtrange Errand? To ſay the Truth,

my

my dear *Iſaac*, I am aſhamed to ſpend ſo much Time in expoſing Vampiriſm, and find myſelf preciſely in the Situation of that *Nazarene* Doctor, who ſaid, that he bluſhed for thoſe whom he refuted, and at the Neceſſity he was under of ſpeaking to them in ſuch Terms *. I told you at firſt, that there was very ſmall heed to be given to theſe wonderful Certificates, which when thoroughly examined, have really very little Authority.

Farewel, *Iſaac*, live well, contented and happy.

London.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a Rabbi, at* Conſtantinople.

THERE are in this Country, dear *Iſaac*, as many different Sects as in *Holland*. The *Engliſh* are too jealous of their Liberty to ſubmit to the Neceſſity of thinking in one Way, or to be with-held from ſtriking out now and then, to ſee what ſort of Country the Land of Error is. They will make uſe of their Reaſon in all their Actions, and

* *Sed jam pudet me iſta refellere, dum eos non puduerit iſta ſentire. Cum vero auſi ſint etiam ea defendere, non jam eorum, ſed ipſius Generis humani, me pudet, cujus aures hæc ferre potuerunt.* Aug. Epiſt. LVI.

and can by no means think of becoming Slaves to the Notions of ſome particular Divines.

Tho' every Man be at Liberty in *England* to follow what Religion he pleaſes, yet what is emphatically called the *Church* prevails. The King, and all the People of Quality almoſt are Members thereof, and ſome of them zealous enough. It is requiſite to profeſs one's ſelf a Churchman in order to poſſeſs any Office or Employment in the State in *England* or *Ireland*. The very Name implies that it is the chief Faith, and as it were the Religion of the State. The Nonconformiſts however do not uſually call it the Church, or its Members Churchmen, but cavalierly enough the Partizans of the Biſhops; for whatever the *Engliſh* may have borrowed from the Sentiments of *Calvin*, their Common Prayer, and their Church Ceremonies favour not at all of that Divine: on the contrary, they come nearer to the Church of *Rome*, eſpecially in their Cathedral Worſhip, which hath a very great Reſemblance thereto. The Biſhops, who are in Number twenty ſix, have their Archdeacons, who have Juriſdiction over the Prieſts in their Dioceſes. All the Clergy, of whatever Degree, are very exact in receiving their Tithes, and other eccleſiaſtical Dues; theſe, however Popiſh, they conſcientiouſly retain, and very piouſly fenced againſt the Reformation's breaking in here. The Biſhops have even a Seat in the Houſe of Lords; but as the Canon Law does not permit them to give their Voices in Matters of Blood, ſo when their Enemies are to be deſtroyed, they can do no more than cabal againſt them.

While the *Engliſh* were yet in the Humour of burning Proteſtants for the Glory of God, the ſingle Determination of one of theſe Pontiffs ſent a Man to the Stake. At preſent there is nothing like

like this, People of all Religions are ſafe from Fire, tho' not from the Rage of the Eccleſiaſticks, The Prieſts of the different Sects hate one another mortally, and their ill Humour frequently diffuſes itſelf thro' their Flocks. There have been ſome Biſhops who would have given ten Years Revenue to have indulged themſelves their full Swing in perſecuting the Nonconformiſts, as theſe again, on the other hand, would be infinitely overjoyed, could they but abſolutely extinguiſh Epiſcopacy, and deſtroy that prieſtly Pomp, the Sight of which they bear with ſo much Pain. For you muſt know, that notwithſtanding the fundamental Points are the ſame with Churchmen, and with Presbyterians, yet that Heat with which they eſpouſe thoſe Differences, which all of them own to be uneſſential, is ſo violent, that it has ſometimes come to ſhedding of Blood. Thus by an incomprehenſible Madneſs, at the ſame time that the Papiſts ardently endeavour the Deſtruction of all Proteſtants, Proteſtants themſelves contribute to facilitate their Deſigns by mutually deſtroying each other, or at leaſt contributing to each other's Deſtruction, only becauſe they are called by the different Names of Churchmen and Presbyterians. You may very poſſibly be deſirous of knowing what are the Sources of theſe Diviſions; it is by chance in my Power to give you ſome Account of this Matter, eſpecially in reſpect to the *French* and *Walloon* Presbyterian Refugees in *England*.

I was going t'other Day with one of my Friends by the *French* Church, he deſired I would go in and hear the Sermon: you know it is a Cuſtom with me to go into the Places of Devotion of all Sects, in order the better to comprehend their Doctrines and their Ceremonies; I therefore readily agreed to his Propoſal, and in we went. I

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was perfectly raviſhed with the modeſt and ſober Beginning of the Preacher's Diſcourſe; yet before he had well opened it, I heard a prodigious Noiſe in the Church. All who were preſent began to act like the Convulſioniſts in *France*, one cough'd, another ſneez'd, ſome ſhook their Heads, moſt of them put their Hands to their Hats; but above all, ſome People in a Gallery over-againſt me ſeemed to loſe all Sort of Patience, they ſpread out their Arms, put themſelves into ſuch ridiculous Poſtures that I could not forbear asking my Friend what was the Matter; but gueſs my Surprize, when on turning towards him, I ſaw him playing Tricks like the reſt. *Lord bleſs me*, ſaid I, *what is the Matter? Is it thus you behave in a Place of Publick Worſhip! Let us go out*, ſaid he, *I find it is impoſſible for me to keep my Temper, or to avoid giving a publick Teſtimony of the juſt Senſe I have of the Affront offered to our Church.* Upon this up he ſtarted, and out he went, followed by at leaſt three Fourths of the Congregation. *Pray tell me, ſaid I, when we were in the Street, what this Matter is; Is there in your Religion any Feaſts which approach the ancient Bacchanalia, or have your Prieſts the Power of turning your Heads before they have well opened their Mouths? Ah! that Preacher*, ſaid he, *hath violated one of our moſt ſacred Rites; I will tell you his Crime; he had the Aſſurance to preach without putting on his Hat. Bleſs me*, replied I, *what great Harm was there in that? Would his Doctrine have been a Grain the worſe on this Account? Do you think that having a Hat on alters a Man's Thoughts, or that it gives him clearer or brighter Ideas, than if his Head was uncovered? I begin now to underſtand what you all meant by clapping your Hands to your Hats; at firſt I muſt own that I thought you were all diſtracted. It were to*

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be wiſhed, ſaid my Friend, *that we had ſtill had leſs Patience, and that we had ordered the Man to hold his Tongue; what will the World ſay, when they ſhall hear what has paſſed at our Worſhip to-day? They will think us a Sort of amphibious Creatures; they will expect next to ſee us go to the eſtabliſhed Church: This comes of the Folly of letting ſtrange Miniſters preach without acquainting them with the Rules and Orders of our Congregation.*

Surprized at what I heard, I could not help ſaying, *And do you place this among the Number of the Grievances which keep you out of what the People call here the Church? Yes!* ſaid he haſtily, *I do*; *their Bowing, their Veſtments, their Surplices, and their Epiſcopal Robes are like this, and all impure Rags of Popery. It ſeems then*, returned I, *that you diſpute warmly about Trifles. How is it poſſible, that you who look upon all Ceremonies as indifferent, ſhould notwithſtanding believe there is any Thing in a Man's wearing a longer or a ſhorter Garment, in his appearing in a black Robe or a white? Did your Legiſlator, and his primitive Diſciples leave you Patterns for Clothes? Is there any thing in your ſacred Books about how many Ells of Stuff are to enter into a Prieſt's Garment?*

My Pleaſantries were very far from pleaſing my Friend, who was a zealous Presbyterian. *I ſee*, ſays he, *you affect to juſtify the Church, yet let me tell you, that you act in this contrary to the Jews who follow our Cuſtom in their Synagogue. That is true*, ſaid I, *becauſe it is our Cuſtom, and univerſally received amongſt the* Iſraelites. *We act in this reſpect uniformly in all Countries where the People dreſs in Wigs, and where they dreſs in Turbans; amongſt the* Turks, *the* Perſians, *&c. we never uncover our Heads. But we look upon this purely as a Civil Rite, and not at all as a Thing eſſential to Religion.*

You

You do well, replied my Friend, *you have a Right to act as you pleaſe, and ſo have we; while there are* French *and* Walloon *Presbyterians, there will, Thanks be to God, be found Men who will ſtick to their own Cuſtoms, and preach with their Hats on, in ſpight of all the lordly Prelates upon Earth.* Saying this, he turned about, and left me abruptly, and with an Air of Diſcontent.

You muſt not be ſurprized, my dear *Iſaac*, at this want of Decorum in my Friend, or at the Intemperance of his Zeal. The Presbyterians in general are exceſſively prejudiced in favour of their Mode of Worſhip, and of all their Cuſtoms. They are moroſe and very petulant, and have no ſort of Complaiſance, if you attempt in the verieſt Trifle to put them out of their way. The greater Credit their Adverſaries have, the greater Obſtinacy they put on. It would be an eaſier Tax to perſuade the Janſeniſts to accept the Bull *Unigenitus*, than to perſuade the Presbyterians to put their Hats on when the Pſalms are ſung, or to put them off, when they are only read. Behold, dear *Iſaac*, for what Whimſies theſe People contend. A Man muſt be very fond of the Title of Nonconformity, who merely for the Sake thereof would refuſe to quit ſuch ridiculous Cuſtoms.

You muſt not fancy that the Churchmen in this Country, are a Grain more reaſonable, or leſs whimſical. If one of their Preachers was to put on his Hat, it would put his whole Congregation in a Flame, and they had rather ſee all the Nonconformiſts in the Univerſe periſh, than ſhew them ſo much brotherly Love and Tenderneſs as to part with their Surplice, or the ſeveral Genuflexions of their Clergy in the Celebration of divine Service. You are an obſtinate Crew, ſay they imperiouſly to the Presbyterians, who will not be perſuaded

ſuaded to liſten to the Church in Things which are confeſſedly indifferent. You are Perſecutors, reply the Presbyterians fiercely, inaſmuch as you would tyrannically ſubject us to Cuſtoms of human Invention. It is preciſely becauſe they are indifferent, that you are inexcuſable, becauſe while you confeſs them to be ſuch, you would compel us to receive and to ſubmit to them, tho' we know this to be a Thing indifferent.

The Dreſs and Countenances of the Presbyterians, eſpecially of their Preachers, anſwers exactly their true Character; they walk gravely, and with a very ſtiff Air; their Heads and Faces are in a manner hid by overgrown Hats, and their Shoulders covered with a moſt enormous large Cloak. If one of theſe Reverend Perſons was to appear at *Paris*, he would be taken for ſome grave old Divine, who by appealing to ſome future Council, had embarraſſed himſelf with his Biſhop, and was in abſolute Diſgrace at Court.

A Clergyman of the Church is quite another Creature; he is dreſſed in a light eaſy Caſſock, tied with a Surcingle; over this he wears a large flowing and magnificent Robe, very gracefully gathered on his Shoulders into a hundred Plaits; a good Wig well powdered, or light enough to want none, ſets off his Face, and an excellent good Beaver with a comely Hat-band and Roſe ſurmount this. Thus equipped they reſemble ſtrongly the better Sort of Eccleſiaſticks in *France*, who pique themſelves upon Dreſs, and are frequently to be met with in great Cities, haughty, ſuperb, and ſcornful. Such a Clergyman looks down on other Mortals as pitiful Inſects ſcarce worthy of his Attention, conſidering himſelf as already a Biſhop, and in conſequence thereof a Member of the Houſe of Lords. Glad at his Heart to ſee the Presby-

Presbyterians expreſs a Diſlike at his Grandeur, laughing within himſelf to think that this very Diſlike keeps them out of the Road of acquiring it; and inſtead of deſiring to unite him and the reſt of the Nonconformiſts to the Faith he profeſſes, he thinks of nothing but forcing their Obedience, which without Ceremony he practiſes whenever it lies in his Power. In a word, fierce and untractable, becauſe he is of the eſtabliſhed Religion, he would have all Things bend before him, and to paint him to the Life, do but figure to yourſelf, *Iſaac*, a Jeſuit, who to convert all the Proteſtants in the World, would not part with a ſingle Lamp which burns before the Image of St. *Ignatius* the Chief and Lawgiver of his Order.

I own that when I left *Paris*, I thought I had loſt for ever the *Janſeniſts* and the *Moliniſts*, but ſince my Arrival in *England*, I have found them again, in the Churchmen and Diſſenters, who have copied them ſo perfectly, that if Miracles were in faſhion here, as in *France* and in *Italy*, I ſhould not queſtion in the leaſt ſeeing now and then an *Engliſh* Prelate canonized for having been zealous in perſecuting *Non Cons*, or many Diſſenters in Convulſions at the Grave of ſome Saint *Paris* of their own Fraternity.

The *Engliſh* make a Jeſt of the religious Diſputes which at this Day divide *France*, and they have certainly Reaſon. There cannot be a greater Weakneſs, or a more flagrant Sign of Superſtition amongſt any Nation, than their being the Dupes of the Hatred, Ambition, and falſe Faith of certain bold Eccleſiaſticks, who under pretence of enlightening certain Points of Doctrine, diſturb Society, and in the End intereſt the State in their petty Quarrels. After all, are not the *Engliſh* however in the ſame Condition with the *French*? Are not

not the Church Divines as desirous of inflaming their Zealots against the Nonconformists? If it depended upon them, will they not force all the World to blind Obedience, even tho' it were at the Expence of half Mankind? Are not they infinitely delighted with that Share they have in the Government, and do they not make the utmost use of it they are able? In short, Can there be found a more perfect Copy of the *French* Jesuit, than in the *English* High Churchman? Or can two People resemble each other more than the Presbyterian and the *Jansenist*? These last are equally obstinate in their Opinions; they declaim constantly and loudly against all Honours and Preferments, with which however it is impossible that either should be troubled. They affect a morose Air, a Twang through the Nose in Preaching, a kind of *Querpo* Dress, are declared Enemies to Pleasure, hate their Enemies devoutly, are excessively ambitious, and cloak all these hopeful Qualities with exteriour Piety. Can Mortals resemble one another more perfectly?

You must therefore, dear *Isaac*, acknowledge, that the *English* very unjustly reproach the *French* with the Troubles which *Molinism* and *Jansenism* create in their Country. It would be easy for the *French* to justify themselves by recriminating. I do admit that the Madness of one People cannot justify the Madness of another, but however it may serve to excuse it. Every where if you find Divines, you find amongst them Ambition, Jealousy, Vanity, and of consequence Disputes and Persecution. The common People but too readily adhere to different Opinions, just as they strike them. They have neither Sense enough to fathom them, nor Prudence enough to avoid them. We need not then be astonished that they follow blindly the Guides

Guides they have made choice of. At *London* the State acts with reſpect to the Church and the Preſbyterians, juſt as at *Paris* between the *Moliniſts* and the *Janſeniſts*, and always without knowing why it inclines rather this way than that. If there were none but Philoſophers and Divines in the World, the latter would certainly be obliged to abandon their Diſputes for want of finding Diſciples to maintain them.

Farewell, dear *Iſaac*, live happy and content, and may the God of our Fathers remove far from thee a pertinacious diſputing Spirit.

London.

LETTER CXXXIX.

AARON MONCECA *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

THE *Engliſh*, my Friend, are perſuaded, that with reſpect to the Sciences they excel all other Nations. They imagine that Nature hath furniſhed them with Talents, which ſhe hath denied to other People. When they are told that there is no convincing Reaſon appears in Juſtification of this their Aſſertion, and that there is ſomething very odd in ſuppoſing that a Man born ten Leagues off their Shore, or indeed that any two Men born ten Leagues aſunder, ſhould not have as much Wit the one as the other; they preſently run you over a Liſt of their celebrated Authors, characterize each of them in a pompous manner,

and

and then put the Queſtion; Why, if the Thing be not as they ſay, there are not as many great Men found in any other Nation? Such as diſpute unfairly with the *Engliſh*, and ſuch as cannot get over their natural Prejudices, endeavour to rid themſelves of this Difficulty, by denying that the Authors of whom the *Engliſh* boaſt are at all ſuperior to thoſe of other Nations. But if we ſpeak truly and ſincerely, we muſt confeſs that this Objection is not eaſily ſhifted off. It muſt on the contrary be owned, that the *Engliſh* have amongſt them Writings, which ſeem to have been dictated by Perſons of more than human Capacity. Whoever has read *Locke* and *Newton* with ſuch Application as is neceſſary, in order to taſte the Excellency of their Writings, cannot but be convinced that there are among the *Engliſh* certain learned Perſons who think more freely, and more ſolidly than the Learned in other Nations.

I know, dear *Iſaac*, that the Liberty which the People enjoy here, gives a certain Hardineſs and Elevation of Mind which is not to be found in many Countries. If we will have Men Philoſophers, we muſt allow them Liberty of Thought, and the free Uſe of their Reaſon. It would be as wild and as ridiculous to look for ſuch a Perſon as *Locke* in *Spain*, as to think of making an Orange grow as happily, and to the ſame Degree of Perfection in a little Tub as in the open Air, and in a Soil fit for it. But if there are Nations hampered and oppreſſed, there are alſo ſome other Nations not a Grain leſs free than the *Engliſh*, and who might therefore give the ſame Looſe to their Imaginations as they do. Whence then comes it, that even amongſt them there are not Philoſophers equal to the *Engliſh*?

You

You ſee, dear *Iſaac*, that ſome Reaſons there are which ſeem at leaſt to favour the Opinion the Inhabitants of this Country have taken up, that there is more Wit, and a deeper Reach in Science amongſt them than amongſt their Neighbours; but after all, theſe Reaſons are rather ſpecious than ſolid: For if Things are ſearched to the Bottom, we ſhall find, that there are among other Nations Perſons of as great and ſhining Parts, as amongſt the *Engliſh*, tho' they have not written ſuch perfect Pieces. What I advance on this Subject will appear a Paradox, however there is nothing more certain. In the time that Philoſophy was obſcured by the dark Miſts thrown thereupon by the Commentators of *Ariſtotle* and the Schoolmen, the *Engliſh* were in the ſame Condition with their Neighbours, as much blinded, and cramped in their Diſcoveries as they. All the Force of their Imaginations did not ſet them at Liberty; they were as much the Slaves of *Ariſtotle*, and as much in Love with the eſſential Forms, which was the Jargon of his Diſciples, as thoſe whom they now excel; they ſubmitted to the Yoke of the *Romiſh* Divines, and had Schoolmen amongſt them as well as elſewhere. A *Frenchman*, in thoſe Days of Darkneſs, had the Courage to refuſe paying Homage to this Idol. He did more, he wrote againſt its Worſhip; and *Gaſſendi*, by his learned Diſſertations againſt *Ariſtotle*, became the Forerunner of *Deſcartes*, the Reſtorer of true Philoſophy, and the great Scourge of the Peripateticks. Mankind after having been ſo long plunged amidſt Viſions and Chimæras, began on a ſudden to uſe their Reaſon, and to examine Opinions before they received them. In conſequence of this a Multitude of Diſcoveries equally ſurprizing and uſeful, ſucceeded to lying Tales and groſs Puerilities. Nature's

ture's abhorring a Vacuum was found to be a mere Whim, the Air appeared to be a heavy Body, Teleſcopes were invented, Geometry was extended much farther than it had ever been; and by habituating themſelves to Reaſon, Men went inſenſibly far greater Lengths than at the firſt themſelves could have hoped.

While theſe happy Revolutions were made in the Republick of Science in *France*, what paſſed in *England?* Little; one might ſay, nothing. *Hobbes*, the Friend and Admirer of *Gaſſendi*, was almoſt the only great Philoſopher in this Country. But what a Difference was there between *Gaſſendi* and *Hobbes?* His Works*, tho' they have in them good Things, may yet be appealed to in proof of the Superiority of the *French* Author. We ſee in them no eſtabliſhed Syſtem ſupported by perſuaſive Arguments; in many Places he is very hard, and in others not at all to be underſtood. Where he ſeems to make Matter the *firſt Cauſe* of all Things, he ſeems to be below *Spinoza*; where he aſſerts God to be the Creator of the World, he is by no means equal to *Deſcartes*, who, to ſay the Truth, opened the Eyes of the *Engliſh Literati*.

No ſooner they ſaw their Errors, than they began to make extraordinary Uſes of the Lights they had received, and perfected many Things which others had but begun; they did that for ſucceeding Generations, which the Diſciples of *Deſcartes* had done for them; that is to ſay, they put Knowledge into a proper Train, and left it to be farther cultivated by their Poſterity.

* *Elementorum Philoſophiæ ſectio prima de Corpore.* See alſo *Prælectiones ſex ad profeſſores Savilianos.* And another Book, entituled, *De Homine, ſive Elementorum Philoſophiæ Sectio ſecunda.*

I make no Difficulty of affirming, that there wants as much Quickneſs of Thought, and as great Strength of Genius to diſtinguiſh the Road to Truth in the midſt of Errors, as to purſue that Rout happily when once it is diſcovered. I do admit, that *Newton* is much ſuperior both to *Deſcartes* and *Gaſſendi*. But if the *Engliſh* Philoſopher had lived at the ſame time they did, it is poſſible he might not have gone ſo far. Conſider, my Friend, that the firſt Principles of *Newton*'s Philoſophy, are the ſame which *Gaſſendi* eſtabliſhed on the Ruin of Peripateticiſm. The Neceſſity of a Void which had been ſo long exploded, and almoſt forgotten for twelve hundred Years, was firſt demonſtrated by the *Gallick* Sage. It is on this Void ſo ſtrangely recovered, that *Newton* founds thoſe Reaſons of his, whereby he ſhews the Poſitions laid down by *Deſcartes* to be impoſſible. And if by this means he has vanquiſhed the *Carteſians*, it muſt be allowed that he does it by virtue of the Force borrowed from *Gaſſendi*.

I am ſatisfied, my dear *Iſaac*, that if we reflect attentively we ſhall ſee no Cauſe to allow this Claim the *Engliſh* put in, to Superiority of Genius over all other Nations. It muſt be acknowledged that they are actually the greateſt Philoſophers in the World. But as I have ſhewn they owe this in ſome Meaſure to the *French*, ſo it is not impoſſible that this Nation in its Turn may hereafter produce ſome great Man who may not only equal, but even exceed the illuſtrious *Newton*. But with reſpect to ſuch as to defeat this Claim deny the Excellence of the *Engliſh* Philoſophers, we muſt neceſſarily aſcribe this to Blindneſs owing either to Prejudice or to Ignorance. In order to be aſſured of this, we need only compare the Sages of *Eng-*

land with thoſe whom their Adverſaries oppoſe to them, and the Truth will clearly appear.

Deſcartes deſtroyed the Chimæras of the Schoolmen; he taught Mankind how to diſcover the Errors of the Ancients, and thereby pointed out the Means of diſcovering his own. He made a great Progreſs in Geometry; and we owe to him the Application of Algebra to Curves. He wanted but little of perfecting Dioptricks, which in his Hands became in a manner a new Science. He made uſe in this Branch of Science of that Geometrical Turn and Quickneſs of Invention with which Heaven had bleſſed him, and which he had heightned by a moſt aſſiduous Application. Behold the mighty Talents of this Man, but remember at the ſame time his Defects. He was deceived in his Notions of the Soul. His Proofs of the Being of a God are not always either juſt or evident. Innate Ideas, which he obſtinately maintained, have not the leaſt Appearance of Truth. He has advanced ſome Errors about the Laws of Motion and the Nature of Light. He has done ſtill more, he has adapted thoſe Puerilities, and that playing with Words, with which he reproached the Schoolmen. He treats his own Term *indefinite* exactly as they were wont to uſe their Terms, alledging that Space and Matter are not either finite, or infinite. In fine, he would perſuade us that his Belief was that God could change the Eſſence of Things.

Newton did not only make uſe of the Lights, but of the Faults of *Deſcartes*; he went as far beyond the Point where he left Geometry as *Deſcartes* had done beyond that Point where he found it. In this reſpect I muſt own, that the Merit is equal in each of our Philoſophers. But at the ſame time it muſt be acknowledged, that *Newton* is a much greater Geometrician than *Deſcartes*, and

and in all the other Parts of Philoſophy he has the ſame Advantage. One may ſay that *Newton* has diſcovered a new World, and found the Means of explaining the moſt abſtruſe Things. He has ſhewn the Errors of *Deſcartes* as to the Nature of Light, and which is much more, he has ſubſtituted in their ſtead, Principles that are true, and which are demonſtrated to be ſo by many Experiments. He has deſtroyed all his *Vortices* ; he has ſhewn the Impoſſibility of their Exiſtence, he has ſubſtituted in their Place *Attraction*, the Effects of which he has demonſtrated, and calculated its Proportions. 'Tis to this Philoſopher the Univerſe ſtands indebted for that prodigious Knowledge which he brought to Light. It was *Newton* who taught all the Learned, to their no ſmall Amazement, that a *Tendency* to the *Center* was the ſole Cauſe that Bodies weigh in Proportion to their Matter ; and that to the ſame Cauſe was owing the Motion of *Planets* and *Comets*. If it were poſſible to believe that any Man might remain unequalled, one would be tempted to ſuppoſe it was this Philoſopher, who has ſo clearly manifeſted the Laws of Nature. At leaſt, it muſt be acknowledged, that if any one hereafter ſhould ariſe capable of rivalling this great Man, ſuch Philoſophers as we have at preſent in the World are infinitely his Inferiors.

Some very learned Men, and above all the *Carteſians*, affect to compare *Mallebranche* with *Locke*. I find, dear *Iſaac*, the ſame Difference between theſe Philoſophers, or at leaſt as great a one as between *Newton* and *Deſcartes*. *Mallebranche* in his ſublime and extravagant Illuſions appears rather a Poet than a Philoſopher. He aim'd too high, and inſtead of reaching Heaven as he intended, he has got but half way. So that he can nei-

ther diſcover what he endeavours to find out, nor, by his Height, can he penetrate the Secrets of Men. He admits innate Ideas, and alſo others by which we ſee all Things in God. He could not perſuade himſelf that the Exiſtence of Bodies could be demonſtrated. In a word, his Philoſophy is no more than an ingenious Romance, which is ſometimes very unintelligible.

Locke always wiſe, and always ſtudious of Truth, lays down Principles perfectly right, draws Conſequences from them which are ſtrictly juſt, is exact in all his Proofs, and has diſplayed all the hidden Secrets of the human Underſtanding. He has taught the Learned not to decide on any thing which is not thoroughly known. Before his time Philoſophers had given us their own Viſions on the Nature of the Soul for Truths, he has deſtroyed theſe Chimæras, ruined the Doctrine of innate Ideas, and demonſtrated to us that all our Ideas are derived to us from our Senſes. Having anatomized as it were the Cauſes of the human Reaſon, and expoſed to Mortals all the Knowledge it is poſſible to hope of the Eſſence of the Soul, he has made them obſerve with equal Candor and Sagacity, that they never could have comprehended the Nature of the human Mind, if God had not been pleaſed to grant to a material Being the Faculty of thinking.

Conſider, dear *Iſaac*, how much more certain, more natural, and if I may be allowed the Expreſſion, leſs rarified his Sentiments are than thoſe of *Mallebranche*. Compare the Candor and Sincerity of the *Engliſh* Metaphyſician with the Preſumption and Pride of this *Frenchman*. He not only bounded the Power of the Divinity with reſpect to the Souls of Men, but adopted a Syſtem as ridiculous as it is unſuſtainable with reſpect to thoſe

of

of Beaſts, whom he would have to be mere Machines, like to Clocks, *eating without Pleaſure, roaring without Pain, neither deſiring nor fearing any thing*. Certainly, my Friend, *Mallebranche* muſt have had a great deal of Vanity; if he fancied that it was in his Power to induce Men to take up with ſuch Dreams as theſe. I know very well that he did but follow *Deſcartes* who invented them, but he is nothing the leſs blamable for that, he ought not to have embraced, but to have rejected them. But how came he to take into his Head that Matter was ſuſceptible of Thought; he, I ſay, who admitted the Exiſtence of Bodies out of mere Complaiſance, and who found fault with his Maſter for not abſolutely denying it. *In order to be fully convinced*, ſaid he, *that there are Bodies, it ought not only to be demonſtrated that there is a God, and that God will not deceive us, but alſo that God has aſſured us, that he has effectually created them, which I do not find proved in any of the Works of M.* Deſcartes. *God informs the Underſtanding, and obliges us to afford our Aſſent two ways: By Evidence, and by Faith. I admit that Faith obliges us to own that there are Bodies, but as for any Evidence I ſee it not. Nor do I think there is any ſufficient to enforce our Belief* *. Do you believe, my Friend, that *Locke* would have ever attempted to prove, that there is nothing exiſts but *God*, and our *Minds?* No, no, he was too wiſe to amuſe himſelf with ſuch blind Illuſions.

Farewel, dear *Iſaac*, live happy and content, and never become the Votary of any Philoſophy, which is not warranted by Reaſon.

London.

* *Reckercke de la Verité*, Eclairciſſement ſur la 1 Livre, p. 499.

LETTER CLX.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, heretofore a Rabbi at* Conſtantinople.

IN my laſt Letter, dear *Iſaac*, I gave you ſome Account of the *Engliſh* Philoſophers. In this I propoſe to continue that Account, and to give you ſome Ideas of the other learned Men of that Country. You are acquainted with the Works of the famous Chancellor *Bacon*. He was in ſome ſort the Precurſor of *Deſcartes* and *Gaſſendi*. One may ſafely ſay, that he foretold that the Ruin of Scholaſtick Impertinencies was at hand. He ſaw the Imperfection of that Philoſophy, and was the firſt who pointed out the Means of redreſſing it *.

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* He very fully proved, that the Philoſophy of *Ariſtotle* did not deſerve to be preferred before the Syſtems of other ancient Authors; that it had been long hated and deſpiſed by the *Greeks* and other Heathen Nations, and never found Admirers but in times of profound Ignorance when the Sciences were utterly neglected. *Quod vero putant Homines in Philoſophia Ariſtotelis magnum utique conſenſum eſſe; cum poſt illam editam Antiquorum Philoſophiæ ceſſaverint et exoleverint; aſt apud tempora, quæ ſequuta ſunt, nil melius inventum fuerit; adeo ut illa tam bene poſita et fundata videatur, ut utrumque tempus ad ſe traxerit: Primo, quod de ceſſatione Antiquarum Philoſophiarum poſt Ariſtotelis opera edita*

Homines

A Proteſtant of my Acquaintance was ſaying to me the other Day that *Savonarola* prepared the Way for *Luther*, *Calvin*, and the other Reformers, and that *Bacon* had done the ſame for the Philoſophers of our times. Fortune, ſaid he, ſeems to take a Pleaſure in perſecuting theſe Precurſors as you call them; *Savonarola* was hanged, and *Bacon* fined, and loſt his Office by Judgment of the Houſe of Peers. The *Engliſh* value the Moral Eſſays of this Author at a high Rate. They have reaſon for ſo doing; theſe Eſſays are indeed very good, but they are by no means equal in point of Beauty or of Delicacy, to the Eſſays of *Michael de Montagne*. As much as the Phyſical and Metaphyſical Philoſophers of the *Engliſh* tranſcend the *French Literati* in the ſame kind; ſo great is the Difference between the *French* Scepticks and the *Engliſh* Writers in that Way. No Author of this Country ever came up to *Montagne*, much leſs to *Bayle*. I very much doubt whether they ever had a Writer poſſeſſed of ſuch a prodigious Fund of Erudition as that Philoſopher enjoyed, and who had the inimitable Faculty of treating the moſt abſtruſe Queſtions in ſo entertaining a manner, as to make them agreeable to Men, the World, and even to Ladies themſelves.

You know, dear *Iſaac*, that the *Engliſh* have no Hiſtorian comparable to *Titus Livius*, to *Tacitus*,

Homines cogitant id falſum eſt; diu enim poſtea, uſque ad tempora Ciceronis et ſecula ſequentia, manſerunt opera veterum philoſophorum. Sed temporibus inſequentibus, ex inundatione Barbarorum in imperium Romanum, poſtquam Doctrina Humana velut naufragium perpeſſa eſſet; tum demum philoſophiæ Ariſtotelis et Platonis tanquam tabulæ ex materia leviora, et minus ſolida per fluctus temporum ſervatæ ſunt. Bacon Novum Organum Scientiarum, Lib. 1. cap. LXXVII. p. 298.

to *Saluſt*, to Father *Paul*, to *de Thou*, or even to Father *Daniel*. Is it not a ſurprizing thing that Party-Spirit ſhould more ſtrongly influence this whole Nation than it does the Jeſuits themſelves. Of late Years *Burnet* took it into his Head to imitate *de Thou*, but we ſee plainly that he had it in his Head only; for in point of Exactneſs, Method, and Purity of Stile, he comes not near him; not to ſpeak of his Partiality, with which all Parties reproach him. They tell us, that in his firſt Volume there are not above five or ſix Characters, and his own is placed at the Head of them all. This Criticiſm however may be unjuſt, becauſe it is poſſible the Defect may not proceed from any Malignity in the Hiſtorian, but from the Want of proper Subjects for Panegyrick. In a word, it would be a difficult thing to pick out of the *Engliſh* Hiſtory any two Reigns ſo corrupt and tyrannical, as thoſe which he has painted out. However that be, this we know for certain, that a Whig never keeps within Bounds when he writes of a Tory Adminiſtration, and that the Tories again are not a grain more modeſt, or more reaſonable in their Repreſentations of the Whigs.

The Authority of *Engliſh Hiſtorians* is on a Level with thoſe who wrote in *France* under the Reigns of *Charles* the *Ninth*, and *Henry* the *Third*. And it would be a difficult thing ever to find in this Country Perſons capable of Writing what Poſterity may give an entire Credit to. There ſeems to be two Cauſes for this. The firſt is the Hatred of oppoſite Parties; one Part of the Nation is at all times the ſworn Enemy of the other. The ſecond is that Preſumption and good Opinion which all the *Engliſh* Writers have of themſelves. They cannot find in their Hearts to allow other Nations any Advantages which appear to them deſtructive

of

of their own Glory. If they diſguiſe without Scruple, and even falſify ſuch Facts as happen under their own Eyes to ſerve their Party-Purpoſes, how much more ready muſt they be to miſrepreſent what happens abroad, when it does not ſuit them to tell the Truth?

If the *Engliſh* have no good Hiſtorians, it is made up to them by their excellent Poets. You are acquainted, dear *Iſaac*, with the *Paradiſe loſt* of *Milton*. This Poem has not all the Beauties of the *Æneid*, but I confeſs I like it much better than the *Gieruſalemme liberata* of *Taſſo*; to me it ſeems that the *Engliſh* Poet has made a much better uſe of Religion than the *Italian*. I do not think that we can find either in *Virgil* or in *Homer* any thing more ſublime than the Portrait *Milton* has given us of the *Deity* making war on the *rebellious Angels*. He ſays, the *Almighty* took his Arms from *Terror*.

There is ſomething very majeſtick in this Idea, and if one dares to bring the Divinity like a Hero into the Field of Battle, one cannot certainly give him a better Squire than *Terror*, whom this Bard aſſigns him.

Waller is a Poet very far below *Catullus*, and yet very much ſuperior to *Voiture*. His Writings are gallant and full of Beauties, but faint and languiſhing, at leaſt ſometimes; his Verſe having neither the Brightneſs, nor the Beauty of *La Fontaine*, at the ſame time that it wants the unnatural Flights of *Guarini*. In ſhort, he has not quite the Merit of the *French* Author, nor quite ſo many Faults as the *Italian*.

Pope is without Contradiction one of the greateſt Poets in the Univerſe. One may, indeed one ought to look upon him as a formidable Rival to *Boileau*, *Corneille*, *Racine*, *Virgil* and *Homer*. This laſt Author is perhaps more perfect in his *Engliſh*

Tranſlation, than in the Original. I cannot think that there is any thing in Poetry more ingenious, more arch, and more gallant than his Poem of the *Rape of the Lock*. The *Lutrin* of *Boileau* is a ſtronger and more manly Piece, but it is very far from being ſo pleaſant. They aſſure me in this Country, that *Pope* was not above twenty Years of Age when he compoſed that charming Poem. The noble Deſcription given us by *Virgil* of the Employments of deceaſed Heroes in the *Elyſian* Shades, does not ſurpaſs *Pope*'s pleaſant Picture of the Amuſement of the Ladies after their Deceaſe.

Think not, when Woman's tranſient Breath is fled,
That all her Vanities at once are dead:
Succeeding Vanities ſhe ſtill regards,
And tho' ſhe plays no more, o'erlooks the Cards.
Her joy in gilded Chariots, when alive,
And love of *Ombre*, after Death ſurvive.
For when the Fair in all their Pride expire,
To their firſt Elements the Souls retire:
The Sprites of fiery Termagants in Flame,
Mount up, and take a *Salamander*'s Name.
Soft yielding Minds to Water glide away,
And ſip, with Nymphs, their elemental Tea.
The graver Prude ſinks downward to a *Gnome*,
In ſearch of Miſchief ſtill on Earth to roam.
The light Coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,
And ſport and flutter in the Fields of Air.

It muſt be acknowledged, dear *Iſaac*, that it is ſimply impoſſible to conceive the Reveries of the Cabaliſts better applied, than they are by him, in order to form a juſt and delicate Critique on the Fair Sex.

All the different Characters of Women are exactly deſcribed in this Account of their Amuſements.

ments after Death, and by a Stroke familiar to great Maſters, the Poet, tho' he ſuppoſes them dead, paints them ſo to the Life, that nothing can be either more entertaining or more inſtructive.

The Earl of *Rocheſter* hath written ſeveral Satires in a Stile as nervous and as beautiful as that of *Boileau*. He had indeed a ſtrong and piercing Wit, a briſk and lively Imagination. He lived like *Petronius*, and died like *La Fontaine*. He piqu'd himſelf through the Courſe of his Life on maintaining the Character of a Free-Thinker. Some time before he went out of the World however, he thought fit to change his Sentiments entirely. The fear of Death, and of the Conſequences that might attend it, aſtoniſhed him. In his laſt Moments he had recourſe to a Divine. But in order to ſave his Reputation as a Philoſopher, he choſe to capitulate rather than ſurrender at Diſcretion. However, after ſome Conferences with the Doctor, he yielded, ſign'd whatever was thought fit, and ſacrificed even his dear Philoſophy, after all the pains he had taken to preſerve it. He acknowledged all his Errors, and a little after his Deceaſe Dr. *Burnet* publiſhed an Account of this extraordinary Converſion.

This, dear Friend, is the ordinary Cuſtom of Atheiſts. While they enjoy perfect Health, they will not forſooth believe that there is a God, or at leaſt they do their utmoſt not to believe it, becauſe they imagine that ridding themſelves of this Belief, they may plunge with greater Security into Vice. But when they are ready to leave the World, their falſe Philoſophy vaniſhes, and they throw themſelves into the Arms of thoſe who offer their Aſſiſtance to diſpel the Horrors of their Hearts. They become then as ſubmiſſive, as before they were incredulous. There is ſcarce any

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thing of which they may not be perſuaded in theſe their laſt Hours. They take on truſt whatever is ſaid unto them, reſume all the Prejudices of which they fancied themſelves cured for ever; witneſs thoſe weak Creatures who have ordered themſelves to be cloathed in the Habits of Monks, and directed that they ſhould be ſo interred.

It is not Reaſon, it is Fear and Terror that makes a Man make ſuch a Change as this on the Verge of Life. To be convinced of this, one need only reflect on the conſtant Cuſtom of theſe Perſons, which is to die in the Religion in which they were born. If their Converſions were Fruits of Conviction, they would in this caſe act as others do in their full Health, who often ſee cauſe to alter their religious Opinions, and to live in another Faith than that which they received in their Childhood: With how much Juſtice then, dear *Iſaac*, may we deſpiſe a Man who all his Life long refuſes to acknowledge the moſt evident Truths, and on a ſick Bed condeſcends to reſume the moſt ridiculous Prejudices?

Beſides the Poets of whom I have been ſpeaking, there have been many others who deſerve the Eſteem of Men of Parts. The *Engliſh* are by no means deficient in Dramatick Poets. I ſhall very ſpeedily give you my Thoughts on their Theatre.

It is not at all ſurprizing that Poetry hath been carried ſuch a Length in this Nation. Men of the firſt Quality have not diſdained to become Followers of the Muſes. My Lord *Roſcommon*, the Duke of *Buckinghamſhire*, the Earl of *Dorſet*, and many other Perſons of an elevated Rank have written Pieces which give them, with Juſtice, the Title of great Poets. Theſe Examples have excited the Envy and Ambition of private Men, every body naturally imitates the Grandees of his Country, and

and it is the Happineſs of the *Engliſh* to have always amongſt them Men of Quality of diſtinguiſhed Merit, paſſionately fond of Glory and the *Belles Lettres*. To be in the Mode here, there is no Neceſſity of learning ridiculous Grimaces, and an affected Laugh, or a contemptuous Diſregard for the Sciences, ſince whoever would pretend to treat as Pedants all ſuch as devote themſelves to Learning and to Books, would be thought dull ſtupid Creatures, and become as ridiculous as they would endeavour to make others.

Before I finiſh this Letter, I muſt take notice of one of thoſe amiable Wonders, one of thoſe pleaſing Prodigies, with which once in twenty Ages, Providence is pleaſed to amaze Mankind. This Phænomena ſo favourable to *England* and the Sciences, is the preſent *Queen Conſort*. This Princeſs is not only free from all the Foibles of her Sex, but is alſo unblemiſhed by any of thoſe ſlight Failings which we diſcern in the greateſt Men. She is a *Heroine*, but a Philoſophick *Heroine*. Her Grandeur hinders not her having all the Kindneſs, Tenderneſs, and Affability that can be wiſhed, neither do the neceſſary Cares of a Crown prevent her cultivating and protecting the Sciences. Her Liberalities are conſtantly afforded to the Unhappy, but of the unfortunate Learned ſhe is particularly tender.

It muſt appear ſurprizing to you, *Iſaac*, that ſo many Talents, and ſo great Virtues ſhould centre in one Perſon; be aſſured however, that all the Praiſes I beſtow, are much inferior to what that Princeſs deſerves. You know that the Luſtre of a Throne is not apt to dazzle me. My Philoſophick Eyes can through that Splendor diſcern the Truth, which when I cannot divulge with Honour, I keep a profound Silence. I leave to the Writers

Writers of Dedications the Trade of praiſing the Great to an extravagant Degree, in order to acquire ſome very moderate Penſion. I am willing to grant the ſame Indulgence to a Poet; the Muſes have for a long time proſtituted their Praiſes, they may now do it by Preſcription. How many Tyrants, how many Drivellers, how many illuſtrious Good-for-Nothings have they commended? But never can I admit that a Philoſopher ſhould debaſe himſelf ſo far as to betray the Truth, and offer Incenſe to an Idol, the Worthleſſneſs of which he knows.

Farewel, dear *Iſaac*, live content and happy, and write me an Anſwer ſome time or other.

London.

LETTER CXLI.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, heretofore a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

THE *Engliſh* have certain Cuſtoms, dear *Iſaac*, which appear to me as idle as any that I have obſerved amongſt other Nations. I was invited the other Day to aſſiſt at the Funeral of a Citizen, and I confeſs to you that I found it almoſt impoſſible to penetrate into the Reaſon of their Ceremonies, which ſeemed to me as extraordinary as thoſe I had obſerved at *Paris*, on the like Occaſion.

As ſoon as a Man expires in this Country, they ſtrip him with all imaginable Care of every thing made of Linen. A *Mohammedan* is not more careful in waſhing a dead Body, a *Jew* in cloſing its Iſſues, or a *Papiſt* in muttering his ſuperſtitious Prayers over it, than the *Engliſh* are in putting on a Woollen Shroud. There are a great Number of theſe ſort of Veſtures always to be had ready made, great Numbers of People gaining their Livelihood thereby. It is forbidden to uſe about a dead Body any Material which is not of Woollen; and if even Cotton, or flaxen Thread be employed, it is conſidered as a Crime againſt the State. I was exceedingly ſurprized, when I firſt heard of this Cuſtom, but when I came to underſtand the Reaſon of it, I was very far from condemning the *Engliſh*. The Intention of the Law which forbids burying in Linen is to encourage the Conſumption of Woollen Goods. I muſt confeſs, that it is ſcarce poſſible to carry a Concern for Trade farther, than to make the very Dead intereſt themſelves in it. This without doubt is a home Puſh, and if the reſt of their Funeral Cuſtoms were as well founded, I ſhould not pretend to criticiſe them, but ſhould as readily approve them as ſoon as I underſtood their Cauſes. But there are many, of which they do not only find themſelves at a loſs to aſſign the Reaſon, but alſo freely admit that they ſcarce know any End that they have.

When a dead Man has been attended by his Woollen *Valet de Chambre*, and is equipt with a fine or a coarſe Suit according to his Degree; for the Chriſtians, you know, carry their Vanity even to their Graves; they leave him for two or three Days in the middle of his Apartment, to give him time to come to Life again if he ſhall ſo pleaſe. I cannot attribute to any other Cauſe this Cuſtom

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of keeping a dead Body two or three Weeks, ſometimes till it be putrified. If this be the true Reaſon of the Cuſtom, then I am perſuaded that the Heads of Families firſt brought it up, and that their their Children had no ſhare therein. For many of them would to my knowledge look not a little out of Humour, if from time to time ſome of theſe dead Folks ſhould take it into their heads to live again, and in conſequence thereof quit their Shrouds.

It appears to me, dear *Iſaac*, that notwithſtanding theſe Precautions, for fear any ſuch ſhould be buried alive, People are notwithſtanding eaſier on the Article of the Loſs of their Relations than in any other. When the Deceaſed has ſhewn an obſtinate Reſolution to remain where he is, they nail him up in his Coffin, and when this is carried to the Grave, it is covered with a large black Pall bordered with white. This Covering is ſo wide, that ſix Men can ſtand underneath it, without either diſcovering themſelves, or any part of the Coffin's being expoſed to view; theſe Chriſtians of the Reformed Religion pretend hereby to do honour to the Dead. I ſhould have eaſily gueſſed this, if I had not been told it, having obſerved that all the *European* Nations, except the *Turks*, take a great Pride in ſeeing certain Pieces of Stuff or Silk born up by Perſons appointed for that Purpoſe. This we ſee in reſpect to the Robes of Kings and other Sovereign Princes; Counſellors of Parliament at *Paris* have likewiſe Train-Bearers, and ſo have Prieſts in their Proceſſions. But Women are ſollicitous above all in this reſpect, and as if their Honour lay chiefly in their Tails, when they are of a certain Rank, expect to have them born up after them. Surely, *Iſaac*, there is ſomething

thing very pleaſant in this. But to return to the *Engliſh* Funerals.

The Coffin thus covered with its ſable Veil is preceded by a certain Number of diſmal-looking Fellows, who look like ſo many Serjeants, each with a black Staff in his Hand tipp'd with Silver; next march the Parſons with a ſlow and ſolemn Motion; the Relations of the deceaſed cloſe the Proceſſion, and now and then appear extremely ſorrowful. At length the Body comes to the Church, there it is ſet down for a while. In the mean time there is a Sermon preached, in which the Praiſes of the dead Perſon are not forgotten. They likewiſe take this Opportunity of receiving certain Fees on account of the Permiſſion of the Corpſe's entering the Church with the black Pall or Covering before mentioned. Each Pariſh has three, of different Prices. The *Engliſh* Churchmen, tho' they no longer talk of the Fire of Purgatory, keep up however a good many Money-getting Ceremonies in Funerals, and have only changed the *Romiſh* Prayers for the Dead into very harmleſs Compliments on their Memory. In this reſpect, I cannot but commend their Decency and Candor. They don't think it proper to take Church-Dues, without returning ſome way or other Church Favours.

When the Corpſe is interr'd, the People return in the ſame Order to the Houſe. There they give them Wine, white and red, and ſometimes burnt with Spices; every one takes a little to comfort him for the Loſs of his Friend, and the Women drink a Glaſs or two in order to keep up their Spirits.

I find theſe Cuſtoms altogether as ridiculous as thoſe of the Papiſts, tho' I confeſs they are a little more cheerful. Inſtead of doleful lamentable

Pſalms,

Pſalms, they content themſelves with a ſhort Sermon, and in the room of the Popiſh Holy Water, theſe Churchmen have wiſely brought in a Glaſs of Wine for themſelves. One may well enough compare the Popiſh Burials to the Ceremonies of Magicians employed in calling up departed Shades; whereas thoſe of the Church of *England* differ nothing from the Feaſts of People in good Humour, Compliments and good Cheer are here united; and in comparing Folly with Folly, I muſt own that which entertains is much more excuſable than that which afflicts me.

People of Diſtinction in this Country are buried in the ſame manner as at *Paris*; they are carried in a Hearſe attended by ſeveral Coaches full of Mourners and Friends. In this manner they are conducted to the Churches, and placed in the Vaults belonging to their reſpective Families.

I muſt own, my Friend, that I am exceedingly aſtoniſhed, on conſidering the Ceremonies uſed by the Churchmen in this Country, at their exclaiming ſo loudly at the Papiſts. They are leſs exempt than they fancy from thoſe Reproaches which they beſtow ſo liberally upon others. In my Opinion, the Presbyterians are leſs in danger of being retorted upon in this reſpect. Their Ceremonies are fewer and more ſimple, which renders them leſs ſhocking in the Eyes of a Philoſopher. Give me leave for a Moment to ſuppoſe myſelf a Papiſt. *I will undertake*, ſays I to a Churchman, *to prove that you have Cuſtoms of as extraordinary a Nature as ours, and that the Thing with which you moſt reproach us, and which in Fact never did happen amongſt us, hath fallen out frequently amongſt you. How often have your Doctors, and your Hiſtorians; nay, and even your Poets, made themſelves merry at our Expence on Pope* Joan? "*How happy*, ſay

"you

" you, *was the Church when under this Female*
" *Preſident? A pleaſant Succeſſor this of St.* Peter!
" *Would not the Apoſtle, think you, look down from*
" *Heaven with Amazement at the Sight of a Woman*
" *in his Chair? What could the People ſay when*
" *ſhe was brought to Bed of a little Popeling in a publick*
" *Place?*" *Theſe Pleaſantries, however, belong more properly to the* Engliſh *Church than to the* Roman, *as I will undertake to prove. For take which Side you will: Suppoſe that with the Learned of theſe Times you give up the Story as a Forgery, and acknowledge that there never was ſuch a Thing as a Female Pope, you muſt then grant, that the Clamours made on this Subject are very ill founded, and you muſt likewiſe allow, that this is a ſhrewd Sign of your Readineſs to charge us with Things of which we never were guilty. On the other hand, if you perſiſt in believing that this Tale of a Female Pope is really no Fiction, I will then undertake to prove to you on your own Principles, that this could not poſſibly bring any Diſhonour on the Church, ſince what according to your own Account, hath but once happened amongſt us, has been however frequent enough amongſt you. The Sovereign is conſtantly allowed to be Head of the Church in* England. *What think you then during the Reigns of* Elizabeth *and* Anne? *Had you not then Female Popes? You can't deny the Matter of Fact, which expoſes you to theſe Pleaſantries? Did not the Marſhal de* Biron *boaſt that he had ſeen the Head of the* Church *in* England *dance. I know very well, that your Authors ſtoutly diſpute this Point, maintaining poſitively that this Princeſs did no more than play on the Harpſichord. Be that as it will, you muſt admit that ſhe might have danced, if ſhe had ſo pleaſed; nay, ſhe might have gone farther, and imitated Pope* Joan *in all Things. Let me ask you then; Would you have thought the worſe*

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of your Religion for ſuch an Accident? Without doubt you would anſwer, that the Failings of a particular Perſon cannot prejudice any Church. I alſo, on my Part, alledge the ſame Thing, and I defy you to find a Reply; move which way you will, I ſhall always have it in my Power to recriminate. But, *ſay you,* when our Queens happen to be at the Head of our Religion, it is a mere Accident; they enjoy an empty Title, and perform none of the Functions. *Now this is what I abſolutely deny, for they have a direct Authority over the Clergy, and in Quality of Heads of the Church, perform all that any other Heads of the Church do at any other time. Before you can rid yourſelf of this Objection, you muſt ſhew how Kings are Heads of the Church, and wherein the Difference lies between their Exerciſe of that Office, and the manner in which it is diſcharged when you have a Queen Regent.*

When the Provinces of Zealand *and* Holland *offered by their Ambaſſadors to acknowledge Queen* Elizabeth *for their Sovereign, ſhe rejected that Offer, and told them withal, that they were in the wrong to revolt about ſo ſmall a Matter as the Maſs.* If you won't aſſiſt thereat, *ſaid ſhe,* as a Ceremony of the Church, go to it as to a Play. Suppoſe I took it into my Head to act ſuch a Scene before you, would you run away? I know you would not, but ſtand ſtill and look on. You ſee I am in a manner ready, for I am dreſs'd in a white Robe, and that is one of the main Things in the Buſineſs.

Do you believe that a Queen who was ſo well verſed in a Ceremonial of another Church, as to have been able to have gone through it in caſe of need, ſhould be at all at a loſs about the Rites of her own Church, of which ſhe was the Head, or at all diffident of her Right of performing them, if ſhe had ſo thought fit.

fit. For my part, I believe that if Elizabeth *had taken it into her Head to preach, none of her Subjects would have had any Pretence to cenſure her Sermons.* This, Sir, is my way of talking to *Engliſh* Churchmen.

Conſider, dear *Iſaac*, that different Sects attack each other in the weakeſt Parts, without conſidering whether they are not guilty themſelves of the ſame Faults which they impute to their Adverſaries. The Presbyterians indeed may be allowed to throw Pope *Joan* in the Diſh of the Papiſts, becauſe they ſtand in no fear of a Recrimination. The Church in this Country ſeems to be the *Mean* between that of *Rome*, and the *Conventicle* of *Geneva*. The Members of that Communion have not ſo many Ceremonies as the former, neither have they the Simplicity of the latter; they ſeem to be afraid of doing too much on one Side, or of doing too little on the other.

Farewel, dear *Iſaac*, live content and happy.

London.

LETTER CXLII.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

A Very melancholy Affair, my dear *Iſaac*, of which I was unluckily a Spectator a few days ago, compels me to make ſome ſerious Reflection s on

on the force of Prejudice, ſince I am convinc'd how far wrong Notions and a falſe Love of Glory can carry Men.

One of my Friends propoſed to me going to ſee a very pleaſant Sight: I asked him very ſeriouſly whether there was any thing in it curious. There cannot, anſwer'd he, be any thing more entertaining, and beſides there are excellent Rope-Dancers. The Gravity with which my Friend ſpoke, ſufficiently perſuaded me that I ſhould have no reaſon to be diſpleaſed with the Sight, and therefore I readily came into his Propoſal. I followed my Conductor, and at a ſmall diſtance from *London*, we fell upon a great Road where there was an infinite Number of Spectators aſſembled in a Groupe. But judge, dear *Iſaac*, at my Surprize, when looking about me I ſaw a Gibbet, and twenty Highwaymen and other Malefactors on the point of being executed. I cannot ſay that I ſaw both at the ſame time, for the latter were not yet come, but the People ſpoke of their coming with a high Air of Satisfaction. *How!* ſaid I to my Friend, *What is this! The charming Spectacle of which you ſpoke to me! Be quiet*, ſaid he, *You will have all the Reaſon in the World to be ſatisfy'd, the Play will preſently begin, they only wait for the Actors who are upon the Road.*

While my Friend was a ſpeaking, I heard a prodigious Noiſe; I turn'd my Head and ſaw a Cart, and in it ſeveral People ſome of whom were well dreſs'd. *Ay! Ay!* cryed my Friend, *I ſee by the Looks of the Gentlemen that you will be well enough pleaſed with this Scene. Why*, returned I, *what are theſe People? And what do they come here for? Come here for*, returned he, laughing, *why theſe People are to perform the principal Parts.* I then began to conſider with Attention the Peo-

ple

ple in the Cart, who as they paſſed near me appeared, notwithſtanding they were ſo well dreſſed, to have each a Cord about his Neck, with which a Moment after he was to be tyed up. I was going to ask my Friend ſome Queſtions about the Dreſs of theſe People, which I thought pretty extraordinary, and at the ſame time ill choſen; but I was prevented by the Harangue of one of the Highwaymen: He cough'd, he ſpit, looked about him, as unconcernedly as if he had been a Spectator; next he pulled off a pair of white Gloves and put them up in his Pocket, and then addreſſing himſelf to the Croud, he told them, that God permitted him to come to that End for playing at Cards on Sundays; had it not been for this Crime, he fancied it ſeems that he ſhould never have been diſcovered, but have gone on quietly and methodically in the way of his Profeſſion.

While the Gentleman was making his Speech, another of his Companions practiſed a thouſand whimſical Grimaces, and ſaid from time to time twenty Droll Things in order to make the Spectators ſmile. If I had not been informed how this Comedy was to end, I ſhould certainly have fancied I had been preſent at a Mountebanks Stage. Our Highwayman Orator ſpoke pretty much with the Air of one of theſe itnerant Doctors when he is diſtributing his Packets; and the other Fellow, who contented himſelf with leſſer Motions and a ſort of dumb Shew, reſembled pretty ſtrongly a *Pierrot* or *Jack Pudding*. As I was looking very attentively upon theſe unhappy Creatures, in order to diſcover whether this falſe Bravery with which they mimick Heroiſm in their laſt Moments would really hold out, the Hangman, who had already faſten'd the Ropes to the Gallows, gave the

the Horſes a ſtroke with his Whip, and the Cart ſliding away, the Actors remained pendant in the Air, where they made a very odd figure. Immediately upon this a great Number of People ran to put them out of their Pain. Some pulled them by the Legs, others ſtruck them with their Fiſts upon the Stomach, and by the Eaſe and Coolneſs with which they did this, I perceived that the *Engliſh* were far enough from that Delicacy which inſpires other People on ſuch Occaſions, and fills them with a Horror for ſuch as by their Crimes have brought themſelves to a violent Death.

As ſoon as I had loſt Sight of this diſmal Spectacle, I could not help thinking of that Inſenſibility with which thoſe whom I juſt now cenſured ſuffered, and concerning which I took occaſion to queſtion my Friend: *Pray*, ſaid I, *what could be the cauſe that theſe two Highwaymen put on an Air of Intrepidity, unaffected by any of their Companions in Death? The Reaſon*, returned my Friend, *was, becauſe they had an Inclination to die as they had liv'd, and to leave behind them the Character of Men of Spirit. In other Countries when a Criminal is condemn'd, his Head is preſently taken up with the Importance of his Voyage, and his Conſcience, forſooth, claims all his Attention. Here it is quite another Thing, a Man of Courage who hopes to wipe off a part of the Shame by his Manner of ſuſtaining his Puniſhment, has other ſort of Thoughts in his Head. He takes care to get himſelf ſhav'd, powder'd, and well dreſs'd, and then this Dreſs again is in part, to have the Air of a Wedding, and part that of a Funeral. He likewiſe equips himſelf with ſuch a Speech as you heard the Man make juſt now, of which he gives a Copy to a Perſon who conſoles him in his laſt Moments, by giving him ſolemn Aſſurances of ſeeing it printed and publiſhed.*

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How! cried I, *ſtruck with Aſtoniſhment at what my Friend had told me, is it poſſible that all the ſad Stuff I heard that Fellow ſay ſhould be printed and laid before the World? I ſhall be no longer aſtoniſhed that Malefactors die here like Beaſts, without ſhewing any Marks of Concern for the flagrant Villanies they have committed, or like Fools trifle away their laſt Moments in playing antick Tricks to divert a Mob. Is it permitted amongſt a People who pique themſelves ſo much on their Reflection and good Senſe, that publick Executions ſhould be thus in a manner burleſqu'd, the neceſſary Conſequence of which muſt be the encouraging all thoſe Crimes that are moſt dangerous for the Publick? The Fear of Shame is as ſtrong in a human Soul, as the Fear of Puniſhment. How many People would riſque their Lives to reſcue themſelves from Want, if the Fear of expoſing their Families to everlaſting Infamy did not withold them! Yet in this Country it is not only thought an Act of Injuſtice to reflect on the Family of a Criminal, but it is likewiſe thought reaſonable to abate as much as is poſſible the Shame of his Execution. Whatever he has done in his Life, a Malefactor may acquire the Eſteem of this Nation at his Death, provided he behaves then like a Beaſt or a Madman. Conſidering this, I am really amazed there are not in* England *many more Thieves of all Stamps, than there are. Sure I am, that all imaginable Pains is taken to encreaſe their Number. It is true they are puniſhed, but provided they die intrepid, this Puniſhment carries along with it very little Shame. If a Fellow dies boldly and with Spirit, his Memory inſtead of being abhorred is cheriſhed, and the Preſs is employed to tranſmit an Account of his Bravery to Poſterity.*

If inſtead of applauding a Malefactor's ſtupid Harangue, who is impudent enough to make a Jeſt of

his Suffering, his Behaviour was treated with a proper Contempt, and his ill-placed Intrepidity received the Reſentment it deſerved, by an Appearance of double Indignation in the Spectators, Men capable of bad Practices would be abaſhed at the Conſideration of their Conſequences, and the Fear of the Infamy attending them would affright them more, than the Fear of that violent Death to which they are expoſed, the Horror of which is greatly abated by the Applauſe they expect from the Reſolution with which they die. It is really with me a Queſtion who is leaſt in his Wits, the Man who applauds a hardned Criminal, or the Criminal who fancies he can efface his Guilt by ſhewing no Sort of Concern about it.

All theſe Arguments, dear *Iſaac*, made no Impreſſion upon my Friend; ſo far from it, that he pretended to defend this crying Abuſe founded only on ridiculons Prejudices, and flattered himſelf that he had fully excuſed it by attributing it to the natural Intrepidity of the *Engliſh*, and the Contempt they have for Death. *It is*, ſaid I, *for that very Reaſon, that the People of this Country ſhould have other Motives to reſtrain them; when taking away their Lives will not terrify Folks, muſt you not have Recourſe to other Methods to deter them from doing Miſchief. It might be allowable amongſt Nations where the Fear of Death terrifies beyond deſcription, to abate ſomething of Shame in their Executions, becauſe in other reſpects they have force enough to produce the Effects which are looked for from them; but amongſt you* Engliſh, *how is it poſſible to keep you to your Duty?* This was received juſt as my former Diſcourſe had been. My Friend contented himſelf with laughing in my Face, and I muſt own that as to this Head, the *Engliſh* are a very odd ſort of People.

I dare ſay, dear *Iſaac*, you will be no leſs ſhock'd than I, at this ridiculous Practice of extenuating

in

in ſuch a manner the Infamy which ſuch Wretches deſerve who periſh by the Halter, and that you will readily admit that the Prejudices of ſome polite Nations are frequently as ridiculous as thoſe of untaught Savages. Every Man who will make uſe of his Reaſon, will eaſily diſcern that it is a Thing more excuſable to puſh to Extremity the Severity with which ſuch Men are treated, as bring themſelves to ſuffer ignominious Deaths, than by pitying them to hurt Society. All imaginable Pains ſhould be taken to find out Means of ſtriking ſuch People with Terror, and this more eſpecially as they pretend to deſpiſe Death. The *Duke de Vendoſme*, during the laſt War in *Italy*, cauſed a great Number of Banditti and Aſſaſſins to be hang'd up, but without being able to put an end to ſuch Diſorders; which on the contrary continued as frequent as ever, the moſt horrid Murders being committed every Week, either on account of Jealouſy or private Piques. At length however the Duke fell upon a Remedy unthought of before; he took hold of the *Italian* Superſtition, and gave Orders that no Aſſaſſin ſhould for the future be allowed a Confeſſor, in order to ſettle his Conſcience before Death. This had the deſired Effect, for it terrified thoſe Miſcreants infinitely more than the Fear of Death. The Riſque of being hang'd was nothing; but to be hang'd without Confeſſion was a Chance they could not be brought to ſtand.

When I was at *Paris*, the Chevalier *de Maiſin* told me a Story of a Soldier who was condemned to be ſhot, and who abſolutely refuſed to have any thing to do with the Prieſts. All imaginable Pains were taken to convince him of the Folly and Wickedneſs of ſuch a Behaviour, but in vain, he remained firm to the very Hour of his Execution,

notwithſtanding all the Repreſentations of his becoming the Prey of Devils, and of his ſuffering the moſt intolerable Torments to all Eternity when he came to die. In this ſullen Diſpoſition he was led out; but as he went along, he took it into his Head to ask what *they would do with his Body?* To which it was anſwered, that it would be thrown into the Common Sewer. *How!* ſaid he, *ſhan't I be buried in holy Ground?* No, replied the Prieſt, ſince you are determined not to die like a Chriſtian, we ſee no reaſon why you ſhould fare like a Chriſtian after Death. The Thoughts of not being interred in a *Church-Yard*, did more with this Fellow than the Fear of Damnation. He thought nothing of his Soul's lying eternally in Hell, but he could not bear that his Body ſhould be thrown into a Common Sewer.

Behold, my dear *Iſaac*, an evident Proof of the Effects which Shame and a Senſe of Infamy will produce even in the Minds of the moſt hardned Men. There will always remain even among ſuch Creatures as theſe, ſuch a Portion of Self-Love, as will make them extremely ſenſible of any Expreſſions of Horror towards them. For this reaſon I am perſuaded that it is ſo far from being unjuſt, that it is in Truth a Thing uſeful to Society, to keep up a ſort of Shyneſs towards ſuch Families as have had any of their Branches cut off by the Hands of the common Hangman. Throwing an indelible Blemiſh upon thoſe who are moſt dear to a Man, is a Curb that will reſtrain ſome Diſpoſitions untractable by other Means; and Experience will ſhew that ſuch as are no way ſenſible of the Fear of Death, retain yet a Dread of covering with perpetual Infamy a Father, a Mother, Wife and Children.

I know very well, that this Maxim will appear contrary to Equity, inaſmuch as it renders innocent People obnoxious to thoſe Puniſhments which only the Guilty have deſerved. But then we muſt remember, that it is ſimply impoſſible even the wiſeſt Laws ſhould prove beneficial to all the World. All that can be expected is, that they ſhould turn to the Benefit of the greateſt part of them. This is the Sentiment of a very great Philoſopher, who in order to prove the Juſtice of the *Roman* Laws againſt inſolvent Debtors, maintains that it is better a ſmall Number of People ſhould run the Hazard of loſing the Benefit of a juſt Excuſe, than that the whole World ſhould be left at Liberty to look out ſpecious Pretexts for not paying their juſt Debts *.

Fare thee well, dear *Iſaac*, live content, and mayſt thou be happy in all thy Affairs.

London.

LETTER CXLIII.

ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a Rabbi at* Conſtantinople, *to* AARON MONCECA.

THE Letters you have written me, dear *Monceca*, and wherein you ſpeak ſo freely of the Men of Letters in *England*, have induced me to

* *Satius enim erat à paucis etiam juſtum excuſationem non accipi, quam ab omnibus aliquam tentari.* Seneca de Beneficiis, Lib. vii. cap. xvi.

reflect a little on the great Men our Nation has produced, and who are utterly unknown but to the ſmall Circle of the Learned. The *Nazarenes* in general believe, that our Brethren are plunged in the groſſeſt Ignorance, and that Obſtinacy is the ſole Support of our Religion. Some of their Doctors have gone yet farther, and have taught a moſt extraordinary Doctrine incompatible with any ſound Notions, even of the divine Being. They ſay, that he permits the *Iſraelites* to remain in the State they are, that their perſiſting in their Faith, may ſerve as a Proof of that of the *Nazarenes*. Is it poſſible to advance any Thing more apparently falſe? For let us ſuppoſe for a Moment, that the *Jewiſh* Religion were falſe, would it not ſtill be ridiculous to ſuppoſe, that God damns a certain Number of Creatures merely to afford the means of Salvation to others? As if it were neceſſary for him to make uſe of ſo cruel a Stratagem to oblige ſome People to ſtick to their Belief. The Vanity of the *Nazarenes* glares exceſſively, in their pretending to defend ſuch an Opinion as this; they think it not enough, it ſeems, to treat us upon all Occaſions with ſovereign Contempt, but they would alſo make God participate with them in this ſort of Uſage, without reflecting that ſuch a Manner of acting is repugnant to his Eſſence. We need not be aſtoniſhed, dear *Monceca*, at the Pride of ſome Philoſophers, who would perſuade us, that the Univerſe is made for Man alone, and that ſo many Worlds exceeding in Size that which we inhabit, ſo many Suns larger and brighter than that which enlightens our Syſtem, are ſcattered through the boundleſs Expanſe, merely to entertain the Sight of one of us Worms upon the Earth. How abſurd ſoever this Opinion may be, it is ſtill leſs ſo, than to believe that God makes

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one Soul everlaſtingly miſerable, that to another he may facilitate the Means of becoming eternally happy.

Viſions of this Stamp are ſo ridiculous, that there is nothing difficult in expoſing them even to People of very moderate Abilities. But the *Nazarene* Divines are by no means for allowing us the Liberty of refuting their Errors. When one of our learned Men writes a Book in our Defence, our Adverſaries are not only forbid the Reading of it, but in certain Countries they puſh this Severity ſo far as to hinder even our ſelves from reaping the Benefit of ſuch Inſtructions. In *Italy*, the *Jews* are forbid to have in their Cuſtody the *Commentaries of* Abarbinel *on the minor Prophets*. You know as well as I do, dear *Monceca*, how excellent a Book that is, and that the more our Enemies condemn it, the more they repreſent it as dangerous, the more with reſpect to us they commend and applaud it. The Jealouſy and Tyranny of their Prieſts hath not ſtopp'd at this ſingle Prohibition; many of their Doctors have written, that it would be both uſeful and neceſſary to prohibite all the Books of *Abarbinel* to the *Jews*, becauſe they are capable of confirming us in our Sentiments. Is it not, *Monceca*, a pleaſant way of refuting a Book to ſuppreſs it? What Judgment do they think, I will not ſay the Learned, but even the middle ſort of People, who uſe their Underſtandings, will paſs on ſuch a Conduct?

The *Nazarenes* have indeed Reaſon to fear the Spirit and the Learning of *Abarbinel*. That illuſtrious Rabbin was equal even to our famous *Maimonides*. What Spleen ſoever our Enemies have ſhewn againſt his Writings, they acknowledge, however, that where his Interpretations have nothing to do between them and their Controverſies with the *Jews*,

he is ſublime, judicious, perſpicuous, and full of Candor. Can we expect any more; ought we to hope they will overturn their own Objections?

The Merit of *Abarbinel* was ſo great, that it overcame the Prejudices of many of the *Nazarenes*, inſomuch that after his Death, many *Venetian* Noblemen did not diſdain to attend his Funeral, which was celebrated by the principal *Jews* of *Padua*. It was in a Church-yard of that famous City, that this famous *Jew* was buried, and ſome time after they interred *Juda Mentz* in the ſame Place. This Rabbi was alſo an illuſtrious Man. He died Rector of the Academy of *Padua*. All Perſons of Letters agree, that he had a brisk and lively Imagination, and that he ſpoke and wrote with great Facility. But, however, he had not either the Knowledge of *Menaſſah Ben Iſrael*, or the profound Erudition of *Solomon Ben Virga*. The *Conciliator* of the firſt mentioned Rabbi, is an excellent Work, and the Hiſtory of the *Jews* compoſed by the latter is a Piece worthy of the higheſt Eſteem.

Abraham de *Balmis* deſerves a diſtinguiſhed Rank among the Learned of our Nation. That illuſtrious Phyſician was an excellent Grammarian, and an excellent Philoſopher, compoſed a Book of the utmoſt uſe of the Means of acquiring the Knowledge of the *Hebrew* Tongue. * A Chriſtian Critique did not however ſpare this great Man. As he had too much Candor to decide haſtily upon

* *Abraham de Balmis nihil aliud agere mihi viſus eſt quam veterum Doctrinam perpetuò convellere atque impugnare, magis inſectando occupatus, quàm in docendo, at in dubium tantum vocare priſcorum præceptiones; cum interim nihil certi ſtatua', non dicere eſt, ſed ridere.* Munſterus *in* Præfatione Grammatices, *apud* Spizelii Felicem Literatum, p. 918.

Things

Things which ſeemed to him to lie beyond the Reach of human Capacity, and as he choſe to examine Things to the Bottom before he admitted them to be abſolutely certain, they charged him with a Deſign of deſtroying all Syſtems, without intending to erect any thing in their ſtead. Thus becauſe he was not raſh and overbearing, they would needs have him a Sceptick.

The *Nazarenes* are ſo given to ſearch out whatever may tarniſh the Reputation of our Authors, that they ſeldom ſpare any. They ſeem eſpecially to bend their Attacks againſt thoſe who have moſt Merit. You know, my dear *Monceca*, that it is to the illuſtrious *Akiba* we ſtand indebted for all that is either true or reaſonable in reſpect to the Oral Law; and tho' I am a *Caraite*, yet I muſt frankly own, that if nothing had been added to the Writings of this great Man, all that he ſays with reſpect to the written Law, ought to be received among all the different Sects of *Jews*. However, the Merit of *Akiba* is far from ſtanding unimpeached by the *Nazarene* Doctors: They repreſent him as a crafty Fellow, a Cheat and an Impoſtor. Such are the Appellations they beſtow on a Rabbi, who by his Candor and Knowledge, merits, that all true *Iſraelites* ſhould agree in giving him the Title of *Sethumataah*, or, *The Authentick*.

It muſt however be confeſſed, my dear *Monceca*, that if all the Books which the *Jews* attribute to *Akiba* were really and truly his, the *Nazarenes* would have abundant reaſon to reject them as full of Lyes and Fables. In this reſpect they would only follow the Example of the *Caraites*. For I muſt do ſo much Juſtice to the Skill and Merit of that Rabbi, as to ſtand perſuaded that all the Reveries in the *Talmud*, did not

ſlow from him, as from their Source, nor were originally collected from his Writings. It is very true, that *Akiba* was the firſt Compiler of the *Deuteroſes*, or *Jewiſh* Traditions, and that he drew together and digeſted into one Work, what *Hillel*, *Simeon* and other Doctors had written in different Treatiſes; but that learned Rabbi was far from collecting all the Extravagancies which we now ſee in the *Talmud*. It was ſuch who afterwards laboured in that Work who invented them, or at leaſt had the Weakneſs to tranſmit them to Poſterity. Even the moſt zealous Partizans of the *Talmud*, are compelled to own that *Akiba* was dead before Rabbi *Juda* compoſed the *Miſna* or *Talmud* of *Jeruſalem*, they pretend that this laſt mentioned Rabbi was born the very Day the other died; but ſure it is without all Foundation, that after having reported this, that they break out thus, when one Sun was eclipſed, another appeared in the Horizon *. I proteſt, dear *Monceca*, a Man muſt be prejudiced to a high Degree, who can ſee any thing like an Equality between theſe *Jews*; and I muſt own to you, that even at the time that I had no Thoughts of becoming a *Caraite*, I always looked on the one as a Man of Learning of the firſt Claſs †, and on the other as an Author of a very ſuſpicious Authority. Heaven has at length been pleaſed to remove the Clouds which hindred my Sight, and I now clearly diſtinguiſh the Folly

* *R. Juda Princeps natus eſt illo Die quo obiit R. Akiba, de quo aiunt Sol exortus eſt, et Sol occidit.* Pezron, *Defence of the Antiquities of Times*, p. 76.

† *Hujus nomen (inquit Autor Libri Zemach David) exiit ab uno extremo Mundi uſque ad aliud, atque totam legem Oralem ex ejus ore accipimus.* Konig. Bibliotheca Vetus & Nova, *p* 19.

of thoſe pretended Traditions, for which Reaſon I reject them. But before I took this Step, I was reſolved to examine thoroughly into the Matter, that I might avoid doing that haſtily which I might repent at leiſure. I am therefore pretty poſitive that I had good Grounds for rejecting the *Talmud* and all its Dreams. At leaſt, I flatter my ſelf, that I omitted nothing in my power, in order to diſcover and come at the Truth, and if I have been deceived, I truſt that the *Deity*, who knows my good Intentions, will have Mercy upon me; for it appears abſolutely impoſſible that he ſhould have given any Authority for the puerile Obſervations dictated by our Rabbies. Can it be believed, that he would ever deſcend into a Tale of the Neceſſities to which we are ſubjected by the Structure of our Bodies? Is it not a moſt aſtoniſhing Folly to place among the Number of religious Ceremonies our manner of eaſing of Nature? However ſome of our Rabbies have not been aſhamed to write very copiouſly upon this Subject. In the firſt place, they have ſettled the Points of the Compaſs towards which theſe ſort of Conveniences ſhould be turned, and theſe are the *North* and *South*. Next it is ſettled, that we are not to remove our Garments but in a ſitting Poſture; this is the ſecond Rule: And the third is, That in all Affairs of this Nature we uſe the left, and not the right Hand, which would be a grievous Offence; ſuch, according to theſe Rabbins, are the ſacred Myſteries of the Law, which are not to be diſpenſed with; and to give greater Weight to theſe Impertinencies, they are inſerted in the Writings of *Akiba* whom they have made the Author of theſe ridiculous Precepts, which doubtleſs he never thought of. For it is impoſſible to believe that a Man ſo truly learned as he was, ſhould have

have run into ſuch low and pitiful Abſurdities; but they were glad, no doubt, to lay hold of ſo venerable a Name as his, in order to give a Sanction to their Chimæras *.

The Rabbies, dear *Monceca*, have done as much Miſchief to the *Jewiſh* Religion by their Impertinencies, as the Chriſtian Monks have to theirs, by their deplorable and ſometmes ridiculous Superſtitions. The ſilly Works both of the one and the other, have prejudiced but too many People againſt all the Books in general, which treat of both Religions. They are ſo much ſcandalized at the Fooleries which they ſee not only tolerated, but approved and commended, that they cannot perſuade themſelves that there can be found any ſenſible Writers in thoſe Communions, wherein ſome Members receive as uſeful, and neceſſary Rules, ſuch Follies and Extravagancies as are ſcarce pardonable in Ideots.

Thus on Account of a Prejudice fatal to the Learned amongſt us, the *Nazarenes* will not be brought to diſtinguiſh between our Rabbies, but condemn them in the Lump. In the very ſame manner the Proteſtants deſpiſe many excellent Works written by Catholick Divines, but ſure with very little Reaſon. For Inſtance, they ſlight the moral Eſſays of M. *Nicole*, the Sermons of *Bourdaloue*, and many others, becauſe they judge of all their Books of Piety by the *Legend* of

* *Dixit* Akiba, *ingreſſus ſum aliquando poſt Rabbi Joſuam in ſedis ſecretæ locum & tria didici. Didici* I. *quod non verſus orientem et occidentem, ſed verſus ſeptentrionem et auſtrum, convertere nos debemus. Didici* II. *quod non in pedes erectum, ſed jam conſidentem, ſe retegere liceat. Didici* III. *quod Podex non dextrâ ſed ſiniſtrâ Manu abſtergendus ſit ... Legis hæc Arcana ſunt.* Barajetha, *in* Maſſech. Beruchot. *fol.* 62.

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St. *Francis*, the Life of *Mary Alacoque*, the Works of the Monk *Cæſarius*, thoſe of the *Jeſuits Outerman* and *Gazeus*, the *Myſtical* City of God, by *Mary d'Agreda*, and ſuch like. On the other hand, it muſt be allowed, that there are very few Papiſts who will be at the pains of diſtinguiſhing between the learned and judicious Proteſtants, and thoſe Viſionaries who wait for the Accompliſhment of the pretended Prophecies of *Jurieu* or ſuch like Rhapſodies. Such are the unhappy Effects of that Prejudice which weak and wicked Writers beget in others againſt the Religion they profeſs.

Farewel, dear *Monceca*, live eaſy and contented, and mayſt thou be always proſperous.

From *Cairo*.

LETTER CXLIV.

ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople, *to* AARON MONCECA.

I Have within theſe few Days, my dear *Monceca*, contracted an Acquaintance with a *Samaritan Jew*. He has ſet me right as to abundance of Things, of which till now I had but very confuſed Ideas. I looked upon the *Samaritans* in general as Hereticks plunged in an Abyſs of Errors. I believed that none of their Ceremonies did at all reſemble thoſe of the ancient *Iſraelites*; nay, I would ſcarce admit that their former Worſhip had any thing in common with that of the *Jews*. Theſe Prejudices

Prejudices of mine are entirely diſſipated, and I am thoroughly ſatisfied that I have been in an Error.

Of all the *Jewiſh* Sects, the *Samaritans* differ leaſt in their Cuſtoms from thoſe of our Anceſtors. Moſt of theſe People live at *Gaza*, *Damaſcus*, *Cairo*, but principally at *Sichem*, now called *Neapolis*. They offer Sacrifices upon *Mount Gerizim*, affirming poſitively that this is the choſen Place of the Lord. They not only cite in Defence of this their Opinion, a Paſſage of their *Pentateuch* *, which they charge our Anceſtors with corrupting, by putting *Mount Hebal* whence the Curſes were to be pronounced for *Mount Gerizim*, whence the Bleſſings were to be derived. But they inſiſt alſo on Preſcription, on the uninterrupted Succeſſion of their High Prieſts, on Tradition, on Hiſtory, and † on the tacit Confeſſion of the Author of the Chriſtian Law, who did not diſpute or deny the Truth of what the *Samaritan* Woman alledged, that their Fathers worſhipped on *Mount Gerizim* ‖. This Reproach of Corruption which our Anceſtors threw by wholeſale on this poor People, has been adopted by certain learned Men among the *Nazarenes*, without reflecting that the eſtabliſhing this Propoſition as a Truth, would be equally prejudicial to them and to us. As I am fully perſuaded of this, I ſhould be glad after reading my Letter, if you would give me your Thoughts upon the Matter.

The *Samaritan* from whom I learned all theſe Particulars, aſſured me that their Prieſts are to this Day of the Race of *Aaron*; and that they never

* Deuteron. xxvii. 4.

† Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. iv. cap. ult. et lib. xiii. cap. vi.

‖ 1 John iv. 21, 22.

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intermarry out of that Family, that they may not ſully the Honour of their Deſcent. He tells us likewiſe, that the Altar on which they ſacrificed, is the very ſame which was built by the *Iſraelites* immediately after their Paſſage over *Jordan*. I muſt own to you, dear *Monceca*, that I can ſcarce give Credit to the Antiquity and Authenticity of theſe Stories, but rather think it a Tale fit to be inſerted among the fabulous Collections of the Rabbies. If indeed any thing could give it Weight, it muſt be that wonderful Care and Induſtry with which the *Samaritans* have always preſerved the Cuſtoms of their Anceſtors, and whatever came down to them with the venerable Stamp of Antiquity. They yet keep up and make uſe of the ancient *Hebrew* Characters which differ much from thoſe that are in uſe with us, and which were the Invention of *Eſdras*, after the Return from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity.

You will eaſily apprehend, my dear *Monceca*, that People ſo much attached as the *Samaritans* are to the Cuſtoms of our earlieſt Anceſtors are far enough from admitting as Rules of Faith, all the Reveries of the *Talmud*. Far from adopting the Sentiments of the Rabbies, they go yet farther than the *Caraites*, and acknowledge no Scriptures but the firſt Books of *Moſes*, looking on the reſt of the ſacred Code, as written by pious Men under the immediate Direction of Heaven, but yet of no deciſive Authority with reſpect to Matters of Faith. It is eaſy to perceive that the *Samaritans* run into a groſs Error in this reſpect: For ſince they admit that theſe Books were really written by the Perſons whoſe Names they bear, and that their Authors were pious Men, influenced by the Spirit of God, why ſhould they heſitate at admitting the Authority of the Books themſelves? If

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it could once be made out to the *Caraites* that thoſe who compoſed the *Talmud* were Perſons of Wiſdom and Learning, they would receive it without Delay; much more if could be made appear that the Rabbies by whom it was compoſed were enlightned by the Spirit of God.

It is neceſſary, dear *Monceca*, when one would avoid giving a blind Obedience to whatſoever is contained in a Book, to alledge that its Author was a mere Man and uninſpired. For when once it is admitted that a Book was written by Inſpiration, abſolute Submiſſion is due thereto. It is ridiculous to attempt to range in different Claſſes, ſuch Pieces as have fallen from the Pens of inſpired Men. For we cannot believe that Men are more or leſs inſpired, or that whatever they receive by Inſpiration ought to be received with any different Degree of Credit.

A famous *German* Divine went very near aſſerting this erroneous Opinion *. In the Heat of a diſpute, he advanced a Propoſition with which his Adverſaries for ever after reproached him. He affirmed that a certain Work written by an ancient Divine, whom the *Nazarenes* ſuppoſe to be one of their Apoſtles, was low, poor, and little better than Chaff, in Compariſon of the Writings of other Doctors †. His Enemies did not fail to attack him vigorouſly on his maintaining ſo evident a Falſhood. In the End he was obliged to acknowledge his Error, and at this Day the moſt zealous of his Diſciples readily admit that he committed a very great Fault in endeavouring to eſtabliſh a Sentiment, ſo directly oppoſite to

* Luther.

† The Epiſtle general of St. *James*.

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Reaſon *. This Divine, in order to deliver himſelf from ſome Difficulties, durſt not deny the Credit of the Book which made againſt him, but then he diminiſhed it as much as he could, and made it much inferior to another Book which appeared to favour his own Sentiments.

Strange is the Effect of that blind Prejudice into which even the greateſt Men are apt to fall, through an over-haſty Deſire of ſupporting whatever they advance! Is it poſſible to find out a greater Abſurdity than this of diſtinguiſhing Degrees of Wiſdom in the Spirit of God? Or can there be any thing more oppoſite to common Senſe than this Notion, of giving more or leſs Credit to divinely inſpired Writings, as they agree more or leſs with our own Opinions?

I know, my dear *Monceca*, that the Rabbins and the Caraites, far from imitating the impious Boldneſs of certain *Nazarenes*, or the ill-founded Scruples of the *Samaritans* preſerve equally for the Books of the Sacred Code, an infinite Reſpect, without pretending to judge by the Light of their Reaſon of the Worth of any of the inſpired Writings. But in avoiding this Error they have run into another, which is common to them and to the *Nazarene* Doctors; that is to ſay, they tear and torture certain Paſſages in order to bring them

* *Cum autem illud legiſſem, non rem diſſimulavi, ſed fatebar in reſponſione mea ad Gregorium Martinum. In illa quidem Præfatione ſcribit Lutherum, S. Jacobi Epiſtolam non poſſe dignate certare cum Epiſtolis S. S. Petri & Pauli, ſed Epiſtolam ſtramineam, ſi cum aliis comparetur. Quam ejus ſententiam non probo, atque in recentioribus Editionibus cum omiſſa ſint illa verba, opinor ipſum poſtea Lutherum hanc ſuam ſententiam improbaſſe.* Whitakeri Reſponſ. ad Rainoldi Refutationem, *p.* 103.

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to favour their Sentiments, and by this means they vouch all the Vapours of their heated Imaginations by theſe forced Applications of the Holy Writings, inſomuch that there is nothing ſo abſurd, not only with regard to Rites and Ceremonies, but alſo with reſpect to the Doctrines of Religion, which they do not attempt to prove in this manner.

Is it, for Example, poſſible to find out any thing more wild and extravagant than the Rabbinical Interpretation of this Verſe in the Pſalms? *Behold I was ſhapen in Wickedneſs, and in Sin hath my Mother conceived me.* Inſtead of going into the Opinion of the *Nazarene* Doctors, who have fully proved, that the Prophet ſpeaks here of that original Blemiſh derived to all Men from their firſt Parents, they will needs have it, that *Jeſſe* the Father of *David* begat him in Adultery, tho' on his own Wife, whom he took to have been one of her Maid-Servants, upon whoſe Chaſtity he had attempted. Is not this, dear *Monceca*, a fine Explication of ſo clear and eaſy a Text? And what Opinion may we not expect to ſee ſupported by Scripture Proofs, alledged by the Rabbins, when out of the plaineſt things, they can forge ſuch romantic Adventures, and gravely deliver ſo extraordinary a Story as this of the pretended Adultery of *David*'s Father, tho' there be not a Word of it in the holy Books?

An *Italian Jew* not only adopted this fabulous Tale, in a Work which he publiſhed, but even attempted to carry it further than any of his Brethren had done, by making a pretty long Diſſertation to prove forſooth that *Jeſſe* had done perfectly well in endeavouring to go to Bed to his Maid, becauſe his Wife was grown pretty far in Years,

Years, and as he apprehended paſt Child-bearing *. This Sentiment, my Friend, contains an excellent Moral, and if theſe wiſe and honeſt Rabbins would but effectually eſtabliſh it, it would in all human Probability contribute pretty much to the raiſing Servants Wages, in conſideration of the Likelihood of their finding more Employment than at preſent.

Confeſs then, dear *Monceca*, that we *Caraites* have ſome Reaſon to reject theſe Rabbinical Comments, tho' as yet you are attached to their Sect, it is impoſſible you ſhould not ſee their Errors. That Uneaſineſs and Embaraſſment which naturally attends a Man's changing his Religion, keeps you as yet in the wrong Track; but as I earneſtly wiſh, ſo I ſincerely hope, that the God of our Fathers will afford you his victorious Grace which he vouchſafes to ſuch, as he leads to the Knowledge of the Truth, and that thereby breaking the Chains which for the preſent bind you to the Rabbins, you ſhall come and range your ſelf under the Banner of the *Caraites*, who are not only the true *Jews*, but almoſt the ſole People in the World who ſubmit their Judgments to the Divine Writings, without attempting to abuſe theſe in order to eſtabliſh their own Opinions.

Many of the *Nazarene* Doctors, as alſo of the Cadies and Mufties among the Muſſulmen, run into the ſame Fault with the Rabbies. They do not ſubmit their Opinions to thoſe contained in the Writings which they believe inſpired, but explain all theſe Works in a manner conformable to their own No-

* *Il Penſiero d' Iſai era buono, perche eſſendo la Patrona vecchia, e la Maſſera giovane, haveva Deſiderio di haver altri Figliuoli.* Percetti da eſſer imparati dalle Donne Ebree, *p.* 69.

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tions, insomuch that ten Divines, each of a different Opinion, shall equally pretend to support his own Doctrines by Authority of Scripture; and it is this Conduct so inconsistent with publick Peace and publick Safety, that hath occasioned so many religious Wars, and such Broils and Disturbances in States.

The *Nazarenes* would be happy, my dear *Monceca*, if they did but observe the same Laws with us *Caraites*, who never venture to write any Commentaries on the sacred Scriptures. It is held with us a Prophanation to mingle human Opinions with divine Laws. The *Caraites* believe implicitely whatsoever they find in the Scriptures without pretending to penetrate their Obscurities, but submitting their Understandings when they meet with Passages which transcend them. But for this wise and easy Maxim, they would at this Day be as full of Trouble and Confusion as other Sects. They would have a Train of Doctors differing in Opinions, and darkening by their Discourses the Points they pretended to illustrate, till by Degrees so many and such arduous Doubts would be brought into People's Heads, as in the End would lead them either into Scepticism, or Irreligion.

In order to prove the Inutility of Commentaries on the sacred Writings, there is nothing more requisite than to shew, that they are calculated to do more Hurt than Good. Now there is nothing easier, than to produce the strongest Evidence in favour of this Proposition. It must, in the first place, be laid down as a Principle, that since God has been pleased to give certain Laws and Rules to Mankind, he has likewise been pleased to explain himself in a manner clear and intelligible. For it would be absurd to say, that God had revealed his Will to Man in such a manner, as that it

it was impoſſible it ſhould be comprehended. Nor is it leſs unreaſonable to ſay, that God commanded Men to obey him, but however did not deſire they ſhould obey him. If therefore we are bound to acknowledge that God hath revealed his Will to Men in Terms perfectly intelligible, why ſhould we attempt to explain them more clearly? A *Divine*, a *Rabbi*, a *Mufti*, or a *Bonze*, do they underſtand the Extent of Mens Capacities better than he who made them. If he had intended to teach Men the Myſteries which theſe ſort of People propagate, he would without queſtion have taught them plainly.

But it may be ſaid, that many of the ſacred Books are written evidently in a very obſcure Stile, and in which there are many things not to be underſtood. Theſe without queſtion were given by God to Men for ſome uſe or other, and how ſhall this uſe be made of them, if they are not underſtood? It is neceſſary therefore to enquire into their hidden Senſe.

This manner of reaſoning, dear *Monceca*, is however falſe and captious. If there are in the Scripture certain Paſſages which we do not underſtand, we ought to conclude that they are not neceſſary to our Salvation, becauſe we cannot perform what we are not informed of, and it is in vain for us to endeavour to penetrate thoſe Secrets which Providence hath but half revealed. Heaven knows that it is for our Good that we ſhould not have clear Ideas of ſome Things, and when Men would penetrate into theſe, this Crime of theirs is puniſhed by their feeling themſelves bewildered. The *Nazarene* Doctors who have employed their Pens in writing Commentaries on the *Revelations*, a very obſcure Piece, which they believe ſacred, afford a clear Proof of the Truth of what I ſay.

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The Proteſtants make this Book the Baſis of all their Invectives againſt the Papiſts, and the Papiſts again make uſe of the ſame Book, in order to paint out their Adverſaries in the moſt odious Colours *. Is it poſſible to make a worſe, or a more unwarrantable uſe of ſuch Works as are ſuppoſed to be dictated by the Deity himſelf?

Farewel, dear *Monceca*, live content and happy, and beware of indulging a raſh Spirit of Curioſity.

Cairo.

* The *Revelations* hath been in all times one of the principal Books whence the Divines have drawn abundantly injurious Expreſſions, in order to pelt thoſe againſt whom they had a Spite. What is ſtill more ſingular, is, that the Rabbies alſo have profited of theſe Obſcurities in the *Revelations*. They pretend that this Book was written by one of their Brethren, in order to deceive the primitive Chriſtians. See in reſpect to this Subject the Letter CLX. Vol. V. As alſo the 4th Letter of *the Secret Memoirs of the Republick of Letters*. In which Letters this remarkable Point of Hiſtory is fully diſcuſſed, and the original Paſſages from the Rabbins alſo are there produced at large.

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LETTER CXLV.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

THE *Engliſh*, dear *Iſaac*, are not ſatisfied with enjoying uninterrupted Liberty in this Life: They think alſo they ought to be permitted to quit it when their Misfortunes preſs them too cloſely, whenever they grow tired of it, or of what paſſes therein. I was prodigiouſly ſurprized at my firſt Arrival, at the frequent Accounts I heard of ſuch Deaths. It ſometimes happened, that a Man I had converſed with in the Evening, thought proper to cut his Throat next Day. Such as brought the News of this Accident, inſtead of appearing aſtoniſhed, generally approved the Action mad as it was. If I enquired what the Reaſons were, which determined the diſtracted Creature to take away his own Life, *We know not*, anſwered they coldly, *'tis very probable he did not like his Situation in this World, and had a mind to ſee how they went on in the other. His Life was his own, and in acting as he did, he hurt nobody but himſelf.*

I fancied for a good while, that ſuch as thus took it in their Heads to make away themſelves did it in conſequence of Diſtraction, and I was very far from imagining that the *Engliſh* hang'd themſelves, or cut their Throats after mature Deliberation; but by the many unhappy Inſtances I have ſeen, and by the Relations I have had from Perſons

ſons of undoubted Credit, I am convinced it is even ſo.

About two Years ago a working Man and his Wife being both weary of the Troubles they endured here, determined to put an End to them. They had a Daughter of about five or ſix Years of Age. They thought it but reaſonable not to leave her expoſed to thoſe Miſchiefs which they found too hard for themſelves: On mature Conſideration they reſolved that ſhe ſhould make the Voyage with them. When they had once ſettled and adjuſted all things neceſſary for the Execution of their Deſign, they determined to juſtify it to the Publick. Hereupon they compoſed a Narrative of their Misfortunes, entered into a long Detail of the Miſeries under which they had laboured, and the Cauſes of their dying as they did. They complained that in ſpite of their utmoſt Endeavours in an honeſt way, they found it impoſſible for them to ſubſiſt; that they were more diſtreſſed the more they ſtrove againſt their hard Fortune. That in fine, they ſaw but one way left to avoid doing baſe Things, and to this they had Recourſe, beſeeching God, to whom, in quitting Life, they bequeathed their departing Souls, to have Mercy upon them, as they firmly truſted he would. Having finiſhed this their Apology, they firſt cut the Throat of their Daughter, and then hang'd themſelves.

This pernicious Cuſtom of making themſelves away, is far from being peculiar to the meaner ſort of People, the Great are not exempt therefrom. Men of Figure and Quality now and then cut their Throats, as well as other Folks, purely becauſe the World is no longer pleaſant to them. And ſo far is this from drawing any Reflections

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or Stain upon their Memories, that they find very often Numbers who approve and applaud them.

You cannot imagine, dear *Iſaac*, for what ſlight Reaſons the *Engliſh* diſpatch themſelves. Some Months ago, here was a Man who did his Buſineſs, becauſe truly a new Duty was laid upon Strong-Waters. He would live no longer forſooth, ſince *Geneva* was to be dearer. I am credibly informed of the Truth of a ſtill ſtranger Buſineſs. An *Engliſhman* on reviewing his Life, fancied he ſaw in it a tedious Repetition of the ſame things. *What*, ſaid he, *have I been doing all my Days? I riſe in the Morning; I eat and drink at Noon; I walk about all Day, and at Night I go to Bed; this, without Alteration, is my Courſe of Life. Part of my time is ſpent in dreſſing and undreſſing. A fine Piece of Drudgery truly! Come, come, I am quite jaded with this endleſs inſipid Part I am to act, and will even quit it and the World together.* This Reſolution once taken, our *Engliſhman* to rid himſelf of his Wearineſs, took up a Piſtol and ſhot himſelf through the Head. Without doubt you muſt apprehend that a Man who deſtroyed himſelf on ſo ſlight an Account was looked on with Horror. No ſuch thing, the Bravery he ſhewed in meeting his Fate gained him the Reputation of a Hero. But if it had been known that he diſcovered any Reluctancy or Apprehenſions at the drawing near of Death, it would have leſſened his Reputation. In vain had he killed himſelf, his Effort would have been looked on with Contempt. He who would acquire the Character of a Man of Courage in *England*, muſt not only do the greateſt Crimes, but muſt alſo do them without any Signs of Shame or Repentance.

Some Years a ago a *Frenchman* killed himſelf, but without deriving any Reputation from it, on

the contrary, he had the Misfortune before he expired to hear himſelf loaded with the heavieſt Reproaches. He had, unhappily for him! taken it into his Head to imitate the *Engliſh*. Whenever he heard of a Man who had cut his Throat, he felt an inward Motion of Envy, which at the ſame time ſtimulated him to follow ſo glorious an Example. *You ſhall ſee one of theſe Days*, ſaid he to his Family, *ſomething will ſurprize you. I ſhall convince the World the* French *have as high Spirits as the* Engliſh. *Yes, yes, this is a Task I take upon me.* As he explained himſelf no farther, his Friends and Family could not divine what it was he meant. After ſome Deliberation, he at length fully determined to vindicate the Honour of the *French* Nation, which he conceived to be exceſſively tarniſhed by their want of Reſolution to kill themſelves. Accordingly he took a Razor, and when he was left alone attempted to cut his Throat. But wanting Courage thoroughly to do his Work, he only gave himſelf a large Wound, and as ſoon as he ſaw the Blood ſtream, he called in People to aſſiſt him. Some *Engliſh*, who amongſt others ran in, inſtead of affording him Help, began to inſult him. *Theſe* French *Dogs*, ſaid they, *would needs imitate us, and yet have not the Courage to cut a Throat as it ſhould be. Look now, look at this cowardly Scoundrel, he has not cut deep enough by half an Inch.* While the *Engliſh* were making theſe fine Reflections, in came the Relations of the wounded Perſon. A Surgeon was ſent for, but to no purpoſe, his Care had no Effect, the poor Man after two days Torture died, and died without demonſtrating that Equality he talked of.

I am out of all Patience, dear *Iſaac*, when I ſee People who uſe their Senſes to ſo good Purpoſe in other Matters of Moment, neglect the uſe of them in

in Things of the laſt Importance, and run into ſo extraordinary an Abſurdity as to applaud ſuch Madmen, as for very light Subjects of Chagrin attempt upon their own Lives. Not to treat the Memory of ſuch a Man with proper Indignity, who throws away his Life without any real Neceſſity, is fooliſhly to approve Actions the moſt cruel and unnatural, which either Melancholy or a brutal Diſpoſition can ſuggeſt. For from theſe Sources flow, in Fact, thoſe Effects which the *Engliſh* would willingly attribute to Greatneſs of Soul, and particularly this Propenſity to Self-Murder. All thoſe bitter Reflections by which they are led to this Extremity of Folly, are the Produce of a dark, ſullen, cloudy Temper of Mind, and of a fierce Humour incapable of ſupporting with Conſtancy the ſlighteſt Change of Fortune. It is therefore not thro' Courage, but through Weakneſs rather, that the *Engliſh* diſpatch themſelves as they do. To ſay the Truth, there is much more Spirit requiſite to ſupport generouſly an unforeſeen Adverſity than to rid one's ſelf of it by violent Means.

The Crime of ſuch People as murder themſelves is inexcuſable, look upon it in what Light you will. If we conſider it as Philoſophers, we diſcover an exceeding Weakneſs no way fit to enter into Compariſon with that Firmneſs of the great Men of Antiquity, who died indeed bravely, but did not die unleſs they were forced to it for the Preſervation of their Country, or their Glory. Never did any *Greek* or *Roman* cut his Throat out of too quick a Senſe of private Misfortunes. The ſame Hero who threw himſelf into a Gulph to avert the Danger of *Rome*, would have ſupported any private and perſonal Misfortunes, without ever thinking of a violent Death by way of Diſcharge. *Marius* is an Example of a great Man induring

Adverſity without any Meanneſs. How many *Engliſhmen* would have diſpatched themſelves into the other World under ſuch a Perſecution as that of *Sylla?* Proſcribed, purſued, reduced to the hard Neceſſity of hiding himſelf in a filthy Moraſs, *Marius* ſtill waited the Deciſion of his Fate from Heaven, and thought it no way worthy of his heroick Courage, to ſeek in Death a Refuge from his Sorrows.

I am, dear *Iſaac*, more charmed with the Courage and Firmneſs of a certain *Spaniard*, than with this Ferocity they diſguiſe under the Name of a great Spirit. This Man with much Induſtry laboured for twenty Years together, to ſcrape up as much as might keep him comfortably in his old Age. Fortune, however, in an Inſtant ſtripped him of all that he had been ſaving. A Merchant whom he had entruſted with his All broke, and left him not worth a Groat. A hundred *Engliſh* would have reſolved on a Leap in the Dark at ſuch News. The *Spaniard* wiſer, and of a juſter Turn of Thought, determined to conquer Adverſity, and to make his Deſtiny aſhamed of her Injuſtice. Preſerving therefore his Moderation and wonted Reſolution, he ſaid, preſenting a *Cord* to *Fortune*, *Here's a Rope*, *fooliſh Slut*, *take it and go hang thyſelf*, *ſince thou art not able to make me have Recourſe to hanging*.

If, on the other hand, we reflect on this Practice of Self-murder, as it regards Society and the publick Tranquillity, we ſhall find it extremely pernicious, and capable of producing great Miſchiefs. What Revolutions, what Confuſions, what Dangers may we not fear in a Country where People not only get over all Apprehenſions of Death, but of all that is to happen after it? It is moſt certain, that a Man who is neither afraid of going hence, or of the

the Place to which he may go, is capable of doing ſtrange Things before he takes his Journey. There are no other ways of reſtraining People, but by Religion or the Fear of Death. Now when both theſe Cords are broke in any Society, what Diſorders may there not be expected? A Man who has committed the greateſt Crimes which can be imagined, may make a Jeſt of all legal Puniſhments however ſevere, if he only uſes ſo much Precaution, as to provide himſelf with the Means of putting an end to his Life as ſoon as apprehended. Murders, Robberies, Aſſaſſinations muſt be frequent. Kings themſelves are not ſafe on their Thrones. It is the Nature of thoſe Torments to which ſuch as attempt on the Perſons of Princes are reſerved, that deters Paricides and Traytors from ſuch Acts much more than the Thoughts of dying. The laſt Words of *Clement* the Monk who aſſaſſinated *Henry* III. are clear Proofs of this. *I bleſs God*, cry'd that Monſter, while the Soldiers ſtabb'd him, *that I die ſo eaſily; for I did not hope ſo quick a Paſſage out of this Life, or to eſcape at ſuch a Rate.*

It muſt be confeſſed, dear *Iſaac*, that there can be nothing more dangerous to a State, than to have in it a Set of People not to be reſtrained by any Fear of Puniſhment. For one whom a Senſe of Honour and Probity keeps within the Bounds of Juſtice, there are a hundred reſtrained by Fear. It cannot be denied, that Men are more inclined to Evil than to Good. All Cuſtoms, all Uſages which tend to weaken theſe Bands, are prejudicial to Society. How much therefore ought we to abhor a Crime which opens a Door to all ſorts of Evils? And can it be eſteemed leſs than Madneſs to give this Crime the Titles of Courage and Greatneſs of Soul?

Farewel, dear *Iſaac*, and mayſt thou always uſe thy Reaſon in thy Adverſity.

London.

LETTER CLXVI.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, heretofore a Rabbi at* Conſtantinople.

IT ſeems to me, dear *Iſaac*, that the tragick Poets among the *French* are as much ſuperior to the *Engliſh*, as the Philoſophers of the former Nation are inferior to thoſe of the latter. I find as great a Difference between *Shakeſpear* and *Corneille*, *Addiſon* and *Racine*, as between *Deſcartes* and *Newton*, *Locke* and *Mallebranche*. It is not that the Poets of this Country want Fire, or a lively Imagination; on the contrary, they have a great deal of Spirit and Force. But the miſchief of it is, that when they have raiſed themſelves up to Heaven, they are immediately dazzled with their own Height, ſink all on a ſudden as ſwiftly as they roſe, and fully by their Fall the Honours they have acquired. As they have not the leaſt Knowledge of the Rules, or if they affect to deſpiſe them, we need not be ſurprized that they are unable to conduct in a proper Manner that Strength of Fancy which they derive from Nature.

Whatever Fecundity of Invention! Whatever Sprightlineſs of Wit! Whatever Boldneſs of Sentiment there may be! yet Regularity is wanting in

in all Arts. The meaneſt Architect who follows the Rules of *Palladio*, will ſucceed much better than a Maſon who has Genius, but who is notwithſtanding ignorant and raſh. The little Church of St. *Juſtina* of *Padua*, affords the Eye more Pleaſure than the Pyramids of *Egypt*. Monuments of Grandeur indeed! but which have a ſtronger Reliſh of *Eaſtern* Barbariſm than of the Graces of the *Greeks* and *Romans*.

Such is the State, dear *Iſaac*, of the *Engliſh* Theatre. I have ſeen there a great deal of Genius, and yet very few good Pieces: They play every Day at *London* a kind of horrible Farces, to which without Heſitation they give the pompous Names of Tragedies. I have ſeen in a very fine *Engliſh* Play, three Witches introduced in the oddeſt Manner imaginable, and pretending to boil Herbs together in a Caldron. I have ſometimes ſeen the Stage in the Light of a Church-yard, and Grave-Diggers diverting themſelves with toſſing Skulls of dead Perſons about; nay, and which is ten times worſe, I have ſeen this applauded.

Dryden, and above all *Addiſon*, hath taken pains to teach this barbarous *Melpomene* a little Manners. But in ſpite of all their Care, their Tragedy has ſtill too much of a ſavage Appearance. It ſeems they are not able to attain that modeſt and majeſtic Air which heretofore diſtinguiſhed the *Greeks*, as it now does the *French* Poets. Figure to your ſelf, dear *Iſaac*, the ſtrange Alteration made when *Voltaire*'s Tragedy of *Zara* came to be play'd on the *Engliſh* Stage; they were forced to make that young Princeſs tear off her Hair by Handfuls, and roul herſelf on the Stage as if ſhe had been in Fits. One would think, that an Author had little Obligation to a Tranſlator for ſuch extravagant Additions. The *Engliſh* Poet,

however, was forced to accommodate the Piece to the Genius of his Nation; that is, to make it ſucceed he made it ridiculous. In ſhort, to obtain Applauſe at *London*, it is abſolutely neceſſary to exhibit beautiful Monſters. If you keep too near Truth, it will never do.

Yet this does not ariſe from a want of Liking to natural Deſcriptions, there are in *Shakeſpear* numberleſs Paſſages extremely juſt, and every way perfect. But what then? If theſe continue any time, the Audience grow ſick of them, and their Attention muſt be awakened by ſomething wonderful and out of the common Road.

Within theſe few Years, the *Engliſh* have had Poets who have written very regular Pieces, but they have not ſucceeded, becauſe the Audience thought them languiſhing and cold; in truth, I do not think they did them wrong; they were ſo in Fact, and one would be apt to think on ſeeing theſe modern Tragedies, that the *Engliſh* Poets had a Faculty of ſtraining their Subjects, ſallying beyond Truth and Nature to ſhew the Force of their Genius, and to be under a Neceſſity of mingling in their beſt Pieces the greateſt Beauties, and the greateſt Faults. *It ſeems*, ſays a modern Author*, *that the* Engliſh *Genius hitherto hath produced only irregular Beauties.* Shakeſpear's *ſhining Monſters are a thouſand times more pleaſing than the Wiſdom of modern Poets. In ſhort, the* Engliſh *Poetry reſembles a luxuriant Tree, which in its natural State throws out a multitude of Branches, and gives unequal Marks of a prodigious Force, and yet dies if you attempt to put a Force upon Nature, and to bring it into the Mode of the Garden at* Marli.

How far off ſoever the *Engliſh* Poets may be from the Perfection and Merit, which muſt be al-

* *Voltaire, Lettres Philoſophiques*, Let. xviii. p. 162.

lowed

lowed to thoſe who have cultivated the *French* Tragedy; it is not however impoſſible, that ſome time or other they ſhould reach, nay go beyond them. That time will come, nay, I am perſuaded it is near at hand, when the *Engliſh* ſhall correct all their Errors. Their Genius ſtill remains, they begin by degrees to accuſtom themſelves to the Rules, and they will in time arrive at Perfection in an Art which hitherto they have not underſtood. In proceſs of time they will join the Wiſdom, Majeſty, Purity, and Decency of the *French* Theatre, to the Strength, the Sublimity, and the pathetick Energy of the *Engliſh* Tragedy, with an Excluſion of whatſoever is monſtrous, mean, or ridiculous. The Poets of this Country have a great Advantage over others by their introducing ſo much Action in their Plays; many even of the beſt *French* Pieces are in Truth but Converſations in five Acts, which we read with greater Pleaſure than we ſee, becauſe the Action languiſhes for want of a proper Variety of Incidents.

The Theatres of *Paris* and *London* ſeem to me perfect Repreſentations of the Characters of the two Nations. At *Paris* they ſpeak, at *London* they act. It is not therefore at all wonderful, that the *French* ſhould ſpeak better than the *Engliſh*, becauſe every Man is Maſter of his own Trade. For this very Reaſon the amorous Intrigues in the *French* Pieces are better wrought and conducted than in the *Engliſh*. We may venture after the ſame manner to determine on the Merit of the two Theatres. The Character of the *French* is Tenderneſs, Love is their prevailing Paſſion, it is their principal Occupation, and Gallantry is the Soul of the Court. The Language of the Heart is naturally that of the Ladies, and tho' they will now and then con-

tradict it a little in their Behaviour, yet there is not one of them who will yield in the Dignity of her Expreſſion to the Heroine of a Romance. It is a common Thing at *Paris*, to meet with a female Platonick, who reaſons with the greateſt Delicacy on the Inconſiſtency between the Communications of Senſe and Affections in Perſons of diſtinguiſhed Birth; affirming that Love is confined only to the Heart, and to the Thoughts; and yet makes her Appointments every Night.

In *France* the Men ſpeak and act in the ſame Manner with the Fair Sex: They declaim againſt Infidelity: They ſometimes affect to contemn a Woman who has tript. In ſhort, there are certain Moments when you would take a *French Petit-Maitre* for the Original whence a Romance Character had been drawn. But if you watch his Motions, or conſider his Conduct but for four and twenty Hours, you ſhall be able to detect him in twenty Breaches of his Syſtem of amorous Morality.

It is natural, dear *Iſaac*, in a Country where the Language, the Arts, the Tricks and Cheats of Love are ſo well underſtood, that they ſhould be alſo well expreſſed. A Painter who works after excellent Models, and who has Nature always before his Eyes, will ſhew more Spirit, and add more Graces to his Figures than he who paints from Idea, and the ſole Strength of Imagination. *Racine* felt that Love which he ſo well expreſſes in his Verſes. He ſaid in Proſe to *Chanmelé* *, all that as a Poet he ſays to his Heroines. We owe to his Conſtitution and the Taſte of his Nation a great Part of thoſe Beauties which we admire in his Works. If he had been an *Engliſhman* he would without doubt have wanted this Advantage. He

* *A celebrated Actreſs, with whom* Racine *was in Love.*

muſt,

muſt, in order to have pleaſed, have ſought ſome other Method of moving the Spectators than by tender Scenes, or he would have run the riſque of failing, or falling into the Error of *Addiſon* at leaſt. The *Cato* of that Author is a moſt perfect Piece if we take away a cold Love-Scene, which ſerves only to hinder the Attention due to the reſt of the Play. If *Corneille* had been an *Engliſh* Writer, he would have loſt much leſs than *Racine*; becauſe he had all the Talents neceſſary to ſucceed on an *Engliſh* Theatre. The laſt Act of his *Rhodogune* is a Maſter-piece which ought to be admired every where, but ſeems particularly calculated for *London*.

The *Engliſh* Poets have Strokes as beautiful and as ſublime as any in *Corneille*, but then they are not ſo equal; if that Author falls, it is neither ſo frequent, nor ſo perceptible; the *French* Poet may be indeed low in ſome Places, but the *Engliſh* are very often ridiculous. One is ſurprized at *Paris* to ſee ſo great a Genius as *Corneille* making Uſe even in his beſt Pieces of low Expreſſions, and we are apt to cenſure pretty freely ſuch Thoughts of his as appear to be below the Dignity of *Engliſh* Tragedy. How often have the following Lines in his *Nicomedes* been burleſqued?

Madame, encore un coup, cet Homme eſt—il a vous;
Et, pour vous divertir, eſt il ſi neceſſaire,
Que vous ne lui puiſſies ordonner de ſe taire?

But what would our *Pariſians*, who are ſo nice as to Style, ſay if they were to ſee the *Julius Cæſar* of *Shakeſpear* repreſented on their Stage, in which there is a Scene where the Coblers and Taylors converſe with *Brutus* and *Caſſius*?

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The ſame Reaſon which incline People at *Paris* to paſs by the Faults of the great *Corneille*, ſerve at *London* to excuſe thoſe of *Shakeſpear*, and other tragick Poets; their raviſhing and ſublime Beauties ſtrike us ſo much, that for the Sake of them we paſs by their Faults. It is true the *Engliſh* Authors ſeem to ſtand in need of more Indulgence than the *French*; but as the Taſte of that Nation is not entirely formed, many Things are as yet allowed, which will not paſs in Times to come.

Love is in Poſſeſſion of the Theatre at *London*, as well as *Paris*, and there are few modern Pieces in which it has not a large Share. But as I have already told you, dear *Iſaac*, the *Engliſh* Poets have not ſo well ſucceeded in deſcribing the Motions of that Paſſion, as in painting thoſe of Greatneſs of Soul, Valour, and of publick Spirit. The Character of *Cato* in *Addiſon*'s Tragedy is perhaps the moſt beautiful that ever appeared on the Theatre: that of *Pompey* in *Cinna*; that of *Burrhus* in *Britannicus*; nay, even that of *Joaſh* in *Athaliah* is not ſo ſhining. Yet each of theſe Tragedies is more perfect than that of the *Engliſh* Author; becauſe he had the Weakneſs to pleaſe the Women, who decide all Things as well at *London*, as at *Paris*, to introduce tender Speeches, tho' he was unacquainted with the Language of Love. This has occaſioned his enervating the fierceſt Tragedy that perhaps ever appeared on any Stage.

When the Science of *Sophocles* and of *Euripides* comes to be thoroughly underſtood in *England*, it will be much more difficult for their Poets than for the *French*, to produce any thing that is excellent, and capable of ſatisfying the Taſte of the Nation. They will then be obliged to have Complacency enough to treat of certain Subjects, and to ſpeak of ſome Matters where their Wit will not ſhine, as in other

other Things, when the Spectator has been moved by ſome impetuous Speeches; when he has felt the Force of poetick Terror, and has been raviſhed by Strokes truly divine, he muſt ſtill be ſoftned by the Complaints of an unfortunate Love, in order to ſatisfy the Ladies, and the young People. It will be more difficult to touch this laſt Paſſion than any of the reſt, and there will ſeldom appear a Genius capable of doing it.

It ſeems that the reigning Philoſophy, and the favourite Syſtem of Politicks, maintains in *England* the ſame Authority on the Stage as in other Places. Their Poets are much more Citizens of their own Country, than of *Parnaſſus*, and it is eaſy to diſcover the Party they embrace in all their Pieces.

Farewel, dear *Iſaac*, live happy and content.

London.

LETTER CXLVII.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, heretofore a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

WE ſee no ſuch Thing, dear *Iſaac*, in this Country, as People's diſappearing nobody knows how; and being carried from their Families, by a Miniſter's Order, are ſuffered to ſigh out the Remainder of their Days, under the Weight of Arbitrary Power, in Priſons where no Mortal can find them. A Tradeſman of *London* has no Apprehenſion of being condemned without a Hearing; they

they cannot keep a Man here, even in the Tower, without due Courſe of Law. A *Lettre-de-cachet* * is here an unintelligible Term. Happy Country, wherein *Fear* belongs only to the *Guilty!*

A private Man in this Kingdom is in no ſort of Fear of being falſely accuſed by any wicked Raſcal, kidnap'd thereupon from his Houſe, and not allowed a Hearing 'till after a long Confinement. The Prejudices, nay even the Hatred of the Great, and of the Prieſts are harmleſs here. As long as a Man is honeſt, and does nothing to the Prejudice of Society, he is under the Protection of the Laws, and 'till he violates them, he needs be in no Pain. An *Engliſhman* needs not in the Evening run over in his Mind whatever paſſed in the Day's Converſation, from a dread of being hamper'd two or three Years after, for an unguarded Expreſſion. He acts and ſpeaks freely, and may, in caſe he ſays nothing injurious to the Laws, give his Opinion freely on any Subject. If a Miniſter does any thing amiſs, he condemns it roundly. Inaſmuch as he is a Member of Society, the Law preſumes him honeſt, permits that he ſpeak his Sentiments to his Friends, and ſecures him from falling into the Hands of a lawleſs Stateſman, whoſe Power ſanctifies his Errors, and ſtamps Authority on his wrong Steps.

They commend, dear *Monceca*, in this Country, the Great, if they have Merit. By the ſame Rule they blame them if they have none, or if their good Qualities are exceeded by their bad ones. If Cardinal *Fleury* was Prime Miniſter in *England*, the People of *London* would do him Juſtice, they

* A *Lettre de Cachet* is a Mandate, by which a Perſon is baniſhed, or committed to Priſon by the Royal Authority, not unlike our Warrants from a Secretary of State.

would

would unanimouſly commend his Abilities, his Prudence, his Integrity, his Diſintereſtedneſs, his Love for Peace, and his Regard for his Maſter's Glory. But if inſtead of this truly-illuſtrious Miniſter, they had Cardinal *Du Bois* at the Head of their Affairs, they would without Scruple expoſe his Conduct, nor ſhew him a Grain the greater Reſpect on account of his Purple. In the midſt of all his Greatneſs, he diſcovered the Vices of a pedantic Life, and very ill became the Rank to which he was raiſed; as much above his Merit as his Birth. Whatever Liberty they might think fit to take with ſuch a Miniſter, they would have been ſo far from fearing its coſting them their Lives, that they would not have expected ſo much as a ſhort Exile. At *Paris*, however, they would have had more Tenderneſs for a Man who had violated all the Laws, than one who had ſpoken freely of the notorious Vices of that Prieſt; whom, at this day, all the World condemns. The Great and the Mob agree in deteſting his ill Qualities. They cannot help admiring how he came to arrive at the Helm. Yet could he revive, and be again poſſeſſed of Power, moſt of thoſe who now cenſure him ſo freely, would run as ſervilely as ever to offer him Incenſe; the Terror of a *Lettre de Cachet* for a raſh Expreſſion, would keep them in a ſhameful Slavery, exceſſively detrimental to the Publick, and to the Prince, who can never be informed of the Faults of his Miniſters, if the People are debarred the Freedom of Speech, and the Right of carrying their Complaints to the Foot of the Throne.

It is beyond all Queſtion as much the Intereſts of Sovereigns, as of their Subjects, not to allow their Miniſters too extenſive a Power, or not to inquire into their Conduct. Becauſe it comes frequently

quently to paſs, that they themſelves ſuffer for the Blunders of thoſe they truſt. How happy would it have been for *Henry* III. (of *France*) if any Courtier of his had been ſincere enough to have ſhewn him the Danger into which he ran headlong, by his blind Attachment, his wrong-placed Affection, and his unworthy Tenderneſs for his Minions? But ſuch is the Fate of Princes! they need Counſel more than other Men, yet nobody dares give it them. An unlucky Experience hath confirmed moſt People's Opinion, that the Lot of ſuch as venture to diſabuſe Kings, is very unfortunate. If at firſt ſuch an Information is favourably received from a faithful Subject, yet it often happens the Miniſter finds a Way to juſtify himſelf, and his Juſtification induces of courſe the other's Deſtruction. Sometimes again the Miniſter hath no need of Excuſes, his Maſter's Confidence is an impregnable Intrenchment; which, whoever attemps to force, is ſure to periſh. Heroes and great Princes are liable to Prejudices, as well as other Men. It has ſo happen'd, that great Monarchs have fancied their Glory ſome way intereſted in ſupporting thoſe they had made choice of, tho' they knew they were unfit for the Poſts they filled; of which *Chamillard* and others are recent Examples.

Since then it is ſo dangerous, that it can ſcarce be expected a private Perſon about a Court ſhould venture to tell important Truths to a Sovereign, true Policy requires that the People ſhould be permitted to bring their Complaints, whatever they are, againſt Miniſters, directly to the Throne. Otherwiſe all Miniſters muſt paſs for infallible with their Maſters; ſince their Faults could neither be diſcloſed by particular Perſons, nor the People in a Body. It is therefore impoſſible to remove this Miſchief, ſo deſtructive to King and People, but by allowing

allowing the World to ſpeak freely of the Virtues and Vices of great Men, and abſolutely ſuppreſſing what the *French* call *Lettres de Cachet*, whereby a Miniſter hath any Man at his Mercy with whom he is offended; and this whether he has done any thing amiſs or not.

In this Point, dear *Iſaac*, the *Engliſh* are perfectly right. There is no Juſtice done if any Man is brought to Puniſhment otherwiſe than by open Trial, and according to the known Laws of the State. When once (under whatever Pretence) we vary from this plain Rule, we leave ourſelves none; and it cannot but happen, that the Innocent will frequently ſuffer either thro' the Calumnies of their private Enemies, or the Reſentments of the Great. Behold an Inſtance as concluſive as extraordinary!

In 1723 Father *Fouquet*, a Jeſuit, returned into *France*, from *China*, where he had reſided twenty-five Years, and was ſo unlucky as to have ſome Diſputes with his Brethren of a religious Nature. He had taught ſome *Chineſe* Doctrines not altogether conſiſtent with the Rules of the Society, of which Memorials were carefully tranſmitted into *Europe*. Two Perſons of Learning, who were Natives of *China* *, came over with him. The one died on board the Ship, the other, who came ſafe to *Paris*, was to go to *Rome*, in order to give Evidence in relation to the Conduct of the Fathers in that Part of the World, from which he came. Father *Fouquet*, and his Companion, lodged in the Street of St. *Anthony*, and as ſecret as they kept their Intentions, the Jeſuits gueſſed at them, reſolved to traverſe them, and to be revenged. Father *Fouquet*, on his ſide, penetrated their Deſign, and without loſing a Moment's Time, took Poſt one Night for

* A *Man* of *Letters* amongſt the *Chineſe*, is a Perſon devoted to Study, as other Men to Trades.

Rome,

Rome, together with his *Chineſe* Man of Letters. They followed with the utmoſt Expedition, and came up unfortunately with the latter. As the unlucky Stranger ſpoke not a Word of *French*, the Fathers applied themſelves to Cardinal *Du Bois*, to whom at that Time they were neceſſary, and informing him that they had a young Man amongſt them who was become crazy, deſired Leave to ſhut him up. The Cardinal on this ſlight Information, granted on the Spot what he was always too liberal in granting, a *Lettre de Cachet*. The Lieutenant de Police, who was charged with the Execution of this Order, when he came to ſeize the Lunatick, found a young Man, who complimented him in the *Chineſe* Way, who ſeemed to ſing rather than ſpeak, and look'd as in amaze. He expreſſed his Concern at his Condition, but ſent him however to *Charenton*, where he was regularly whipped twice a Day, as the *Abbé des Fontaines* was ſince at *Biſſêtre* *. The poor *Chineſe*, underſtanding nothing of the Matter, took all this for the Cuſtom of *France*; and tho' he had been but two Days at *Paris*, was heartily ſick of their Behaviour. In this Manner he paſſed three Years on Bread and Water amongſt the Reverend Father *Floggers*, and the poor diſtracted Creatures who were *flogged*, without ever comprehending there were any third Sort of People in *France*, but ſuppoſing it the ſole Employment of one Part of the Nation, to make the other dance to the Whip. At the end of that Space of Time there happened a Change in the Miniſtry, and a new Lieutenant de Police was appointed. He began his Office with a Review of the Priſons belonging thereto, and viſited that of the mad Folks at *Charenton* amongſt

* This *Anecdote* is cleared up in the firſt Part of *Secret Memoirs of the Republick of Letters*.

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the reſt. After he had examined all who were produced, he aſked if there were none yet to ſee? They anſwered but one, and that he was a poor Creature who ſpoke a Language nobody underſtood. A reverend Jeſuit who accompanied this Magiſtrate, aſſured him it was a kind of Madneſs peculiar to this Man not to anſwer in *French*, and adviſed him not to call for him, becauſe it would be to no purpoſe. The Lieutenant did not reliſh this Advice, and ſo the young Man was brought out. He preſently fell on his Knees to that Magiſtrate, who cauſed ſeveral Perſons to ſpeak to him in *Spaniſh*, *Italian*, *Latin*, *Greek*, and *Engliſh* in vain, he only repeated the ſame Word, *Kanton*, *Kanton*. The Father piouſly affirmed he was poſſeſſed; but the Lieutenant recollecting there was ſuch a Place in *China*, ſent for an Interpreter, who underſtood *Chineſe*, and then the Story came out. The Magiſtrate knew not what to do, and for once a Jeſuit knew not what to ſay. The Duke of *Bourbon*, who was then at the Head of Affairs, being acquainted with the Thing, took care to have the *Chineſe* cloathed and provided for, 'till an Opportunity offered of ſending him home to *China*; whence, it is generally thought, few Men of Letters will for the future venture in the Company of Jeſuits to make the Tour of *Rome*.

See, dear *Iſaac*, how terribly theſe *Lettres de Cachet* may be abuſed! How many Wretches may yet labour under this Tyranny, ſo inconſiſtent with all the Rules of Juſtice and Equity? If a Prelate finds himſelf at a loſs how to deal with one of his Clergy, he has nothing more to do than inform againſt him as a Janſeniſt; a *Lettre de Cachet* comes inſtantly forth, and he is diſpoſed of for ever. A Man ſo exiled is ſo far from having it in his power to do himſelf Juſtice, by explaining his Conduct, that generally

generally ſpeaking he is prohibited all Correſpondence, and ſent to reſide in the midſt of his Enemies; who ſet their Wits to work, by well-invented Stories, to keep up, and even to augment the Prejudice taken againſt an innocent Perſon. How many People within this laſt Age have been arreſted, and lain long in loathſome Priſons, on ill-grounded Suſpicions, and falſe Accuſations? What dreadful Abuſes have there been of *Lettres de Cachet?* And how many ſtill ſubſiſt? To ſuch a Height at length this Evil came, that private People counterfeited theſe Letters, and a Criminal was hanged with this Inſcription in large Characters on his Breaſt, A FORGER OF LETTRES DE CACHET.

It is in vain, my Friend, that in order to juſtify this Practice of puniſhing without Trial, the abſolute Power of Princes, and the Neceſſity of ſecuring ſome Sort of People is alledged. Both theſe Objections are trivial. Princes ought for their own Intereſts to accuſtom the People to ſee all Things done according to Law. Beſides, if they are Lords, they are, at leaſt they ought to be, Fathers alſo to their Subjects; and Equity in this Caſe forbids that they ſhould ſuffer the Weaker to be the Victims of the more Powerful; or that any one Man ſhould have ſuch Authority as to injure others with Impunity.

If there could be any Security had, that ſucceeding Miniſters in *France* would reſemble the preſent, the Prince might, without fear, intruſt them with the Management of his Power without Reſerve. He might be aſſured that it would be exerciſed ſo as to make the People happy; and they on the other hand would be ſo far from fearing any digreſſions from the ordinary Rules of Juſtice, that they would apprehend *Lettres de Cachet* Acts of Lenity, ſerving

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to withdraw People from the too great Severities of the Law. But for one Cardinal *Fleury*, there are thirty Cardinals *Du Bois*. Is it then at all juſt that the People ſhould be expoſed to the Caprice of a Man, who abuſes the Power of his Sovereign; or that the Lives and Liberties of Subjects ſhould depend on the Credit their Enemies have with a Prime Miniſter?

The principal Care of Kings ought to be rendering their Subjects exact Juſtice; and thereby preventing the Small from ſtanding in fear of the Great. It is therefore abſolutely neceſſary, that every Man ſhould have an Opportunity of defending himſelf in a legal Way, before he is condemned; and that Judgment ſhould be pronounced by Perſons abſolutely impartial and unbiaſſed. Obſerve one thing, my Friend, that the Miniſter is commonly, if not always, an Adverſary to thoſe who ſuffer by theſe *Lettres de Cachet:* Does not Equity then require that there ſhould be ſome Judge between a private Perſon, and his avow'd Adverſary? What would be ſaid of a Court of Juſtice, where, on the Attorney General's winding up his Harangue againſt the Criminals, they were hanged up without more ado? Would not all the World blame ſuch a ſhameful Dependancy on the Opinion of one Man? And what in this Capacity of granting Warrants is a Miniſter more than a Peace-Officer? It is true, thoſe who offend againſt the Laws ought to be puniſhed; but then they ought alſo to be puniſhed according as the Law directs.

The fatal Effects which follow wherever there are evil Miniſters, the Bloodſhed and Murders they occaſion, the Proſcriptions which they are but too ready to attempt on very ſlight Provocations, are but too ſtrong Motives to induce Sovereigns to act cautiouſly in the Powers they indulge them, and

and not to ſuffer them to act but according to the Rules which Juſtice preſcribes. It is not eaſy to ſay whether Princes or private Men are moſt concerned to ſee Juſtice adminiſtred ſteadily, according to the eſtabliſhed Rules, and with the utmoſt Solemnity. If the People have juſt Cauſe to tremble at the deſpotic Power of abſolute Miniſters, their Maſters have no leſs Cauſe to be alarmed if they conſider their deſperate Effects. If they could but know ſometimes how much they ſtand indebted to ſuch as oppoſe their Miniſters, and thoſe whom they intruſt with their Affairs, far from allowing them to be oppreſſed, they would hear and make uſe of their Counſels.

As to the reſt, dear *Iſaac*, I am ſenſible enough, that let a Miniſter be ever ſo able, there will be uneaſy and malicious Men, who will oppoſe, thwart, and miſrepreſent his Actions, however wiſe, however uſeful. It is not ſuch ſort of Folks I would have Kings regard, who are in truth but bad Subjects, as well as indifferent Men. When I ſpeak of Princes liſtning to private Informations, I ſuppoſe them always to come from Perſons of known Probity, and remarkably well affected. It would be ridiculous indeed to expect a Monarch ſhould liſten to the Clamour of a few ſeditious People. That would be an Evil not much inferior to the former, ſince it is certain the greateſt and the beſt cannot vanquiſh Envy.

Cardinal *Fleury* in all Probability will one Day be more reſpected by Poſterity, than Cardinal *Richelieu*; at leaſt, I am perſuaded that all Philoſophick Judges of Mankind will prefer him to all the Miniſters that have been in *France*. But this however does not hinder ſome from being blind enough, or Knaves enough not to acknowledge his Virtues.

Sir *Robert Walpole*, who is the Miniſter here, is a Man of a vaſt penetrating and ſublime Genius, and is no leſs ſollicitous for the Good of his Country, than attentive to whatever concerns the Glory of his Maſter. He ſupports with wonderful Capacity and conſummate Prudence the whole Weight of publick Affairs. He has carried Commerce and Credit to the higheſt Pitch. However, Multitudes declaim againſt him. He has indeed more Enemies than the *French* Miniſter. In ſpite however of their impotent Clamour, not only the moſt reaſonable People among the *Engliſh*, but all *Europe* in general do Juſtice to his Capacity, and applaud his Merit. It is very poſſible his Enemies would be more moderate if his Qualifications were leſs conſpicuous. I am thinking, *Iſaac*, while I write, that if by any Accident this Letter had fallen into the Hands of an *Engliſh* Malecontent, he would not fail to aſſure you theſe Praiſes were beſtowed for certain Reaſons which he would have the Charity to gueſs at. Nor would he ever admit, that I, tho' a *Jew*, a Stranger in *England*, and unknown at Court, would commend a Perſon merely becauſe I thought him commendable.

Fare thee well, dear *Iſaac*, live happy and content, and may the God of our Fathers cover thee with Proſperities.

London.

LET-

LETTER CXLVIII.

JACOB BRITO, *to* AARON MONCECA.

BAD Weather and contrary Winds, dear *Monceca*, have hindred my embarking. I wait with great Impatience the happy Moment when I ſhall quit this Country. In ſpite of my Diſguiſe, notwithſtanding all the Precautions I take, I am under mortal Inquietudes. I am terrified when I conſider the Avarice of the Monks, and I perfectly tremble, when I call to mind their exceſſive Power in this Place. Yet exceſſive as it is, it is much leſs ſo than ever it was in times paſt; judge then to what a Length it was once carried, and with what Inſolence and Tyranny they abuſed it.

There has happened here within theſe few Days an Adventure very mortifying for the Prieſts. The Goaler and his Archers who have the Cuſtody of the Priſon of the Officiality, committed all ſorts of Crimes. They robbed, beat, abuſed the Priſoners at their pleaſure, and gave all the Liberty they could deſire to ſome who had it in their power to pay for it; ſo that the moſt guilty were favoured moſt. The Corregidor or chief Magiſtrate of the City being informed of theſe Irregularities, cauſed the Goaler and ſome of his Mirmydons to be apprehended and conducted to the publick Priſons. Upon this the Patriarch took fire, as ſuppoſing himſelf bound at all Events to ſupport theſe Raſcals, becauſe they depended on his Juriſdiction. He therefore excommunicated the Corre-

Corregidor immediately, as guilty of a great and notorious Crime. That Magiſtrate being extremely ſenſible of this Affront, appealed to the King, informed him of the injurious Treatment he had received, and met with the Redreſs he expected. The King eaſily apprehended that the Inſult offered to this Magiſtrate reflected on the Crown, and that his Majeſty's Authority was wounded by this Act of Preſumption in the Patriarch. In fine, he was compelled to recall his Excommunication, and even to write a very polite Epiſtle to the Corregidor, beſeeching him to excuſe the Raſhneſs he had ſhewn in endeavouring to exclude him from the Communion of the Faithful.

This juſt and commendable Action of the King's, which in any other Country would paſs for an ordinary Occurrence, it belonging to the Royal Authority to do Juſtice in all Caſes to its Subjects, is looked on here at *Lisbon* as a very bold Thing, and worthy of the moſt heroick Courage. The *French* could not make more to do about the Pyramid which *Lewis* XIV. cauſed to be erected in the midſt of *Rome*, than the wiſeſt of the *Portugueſe* do about this Action, ſo glorious for the King, ſo equitable for the Magiſtrates, and ſo mortifying to the Eccleſiaſticks. This will however appear the leſs extraordinary, if you conſider the Difference between the Characters of the *French* and *Portugueſe:* You will then eaſily acknowledge that it was not more difficult for the Monarch of *France* to humble the Pope, than for the King of *Portugal* to check the Pride of the Patriarch, who is revered as a kind of Divinity by ſeven Eights of his Subjects.

Whenever at *Paris* the Sovereign is inclined to act againſt the *Roman* Pontiff, all things favour his Deſign. The Parliament ſees its mortal Enemy

humbled with Pleaſure. Many Eccleſiaſticks bleſs the Hand which protects the Rights of the *Gallican* Church. The People are thankful for the Preſervation of their Liberties. And as for the Great, thoſe everlaſting Slaves of the Throne, ready to turn *Turks* if the King put on a Turban, they go to bed *Moliniſts* and riſe *Janſeniſts*, as their Intereſts direct them. Their Concern for their Fortunes regulates their Faith. If Circumciſion was the only Road to Preferment how many Brethren, dear *Monceca*, ſhould we have at Court?

People in *Portugal* think in quite another Way. The Prieſts, the Monks, and the Inquiſitors are all concerned in ſupporting the Authority of their Chief; any Attempt on him rouzes them all. A prodigious Croud of bigotted Laicks, inſtead of oppoſing the Invaſions of the Eccleſiaſticks, reſpectfully kiſs the Cords with which they are bound. The People in general, groſly ſuperſtitious, never diſtinguiſh between the Intereſts of Prieſts and that of Religion. Blind alike in Judgment and in Conduct, to what Exceſs may they not be carried when influenced by the Authors of their Enthuſiaſm? There remains therefore to ſupport the King in any ſuch Deſign of moderating the Power of the Clergy, only ſuch as in ſpite of national Deluſion have the Courage to make uſe of their Reaſon. Amongſt theſe we may generally reckon the Men of Quality whom a good Education and Converſation with the World hath qualified to ſee farther than others into the Frauds of Prieſts, the Avarice of Churchmen and the Difference between the Intereſt of Religion and that of the Clergy. But however conſiderable this Succeſs may be, it is not to be compared with the Facility the King of *France* meets with in the Proſecution of the like Deſign. There is therefore as high a Spirit, and

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as great a Degree of Courage neceſſary to do ſmall Things at *Lisbon*, as to perform great and celebrated Exploits at *Paris*.

The reigning King of *Portugal* has had ſeveral Struggles with the Court of *Rome*. He has indeed done what none of his Predeceſſors durſt attempt. And by his Firmneſs he has always hindred them from carrying their Point. Happily for himſelf and his Kingdom, he is always ready to hear the Advice of true Patriots, and which is more, to follow when he has heard it.

The Misfortunes which Don *Sebaſtian* drew upon himſelf, by blindly and imprudently following the Advices of Monks, ought to deter all future Kings of *Portugal* from ſuch a Proceeding. That unfortunate Monarch ruined himſelf by yielding to the Perſuaſions of ſome Jeſuits he had about him, who engaged him to give the *Moors* Battle, tho' their Army was three times as ſtrong as his own. Theſe Prieſts flattered him with the Hopes of miraculous Aſſiſtance. But alas this failed! and that imprudent and unhappy Prince paid with his Life for his Weakneſs and Credulity; a juſt indeed, but ſure a ſevere Chaſtiſement for his Facility in ſuffering himſelf to be directed by Monks in Things ſo remote from their Profeſſion, as is whatever relates to Arms.

The Fate of Don *Sebaſtian* was ſo much the more unhappy, ſince many have inclined to think that the Jeſuits gave him this Advice on purpoſe to deſtroy him. Tho' this is a Thing by no means certain, yet ſome have ventured to adopt it as an indubitable Truth. *Some there are*, ſays Brantome *, *who aſſure us, that the Jeſuits did and ſaid all with good Intention: Others again ſuppoſe they were ſeduced and corrupted by the King of* Spain, *to*

* *Dames Galantes*, Tom. II. *p.* 88.

puſh this unfortunate young Prince, too full of Courage and of Fire, on his Fate, that the Spaniſh Monarch *might the more eaſily ſeize what it is certain he afterwards did ſeize.*

If, dear *Monceca*, you ſhould inquire what my Judgment is in reſpect to this Diſpute, I muſt freely own that it is a Doubt with me which Opinion has the greateſt Appearance of Truth. It may be alledged that this ought to be added to the long Liſt of imaginary Crimes which the Enemies of the Jeſuits have placed to their Account, as no doubt that ſuch a Liſt there is: But then it may be on the other hand ſuggeſted, that it is by no means improbable that the Jeſuits, ſo much at that time devoted to the King of *Spain*, ſhould take this Step, in order to his acquiring Dominions he had already ſwallowed in Imagination, ſince in that caſe, they only acted in reality in *Portugal*, what moſt zealouſly, as well as baſely, they endeavoured to bring to paſs in *France* in the Times of the League.

Don *Sebaſtian* is not the ſole Monarch who has fallen thro' too great confidence in Prieſts. *Louis* King of *Hungary* was ſlain in a Battle againſt the *Turks*, which Engagement was owing to the obſtinate Perſuaſions of a Cardinal in whom he had too great truſt. A *French* King of the ſame Name, after he had, at the ſollicitation of the Clergy, made many Wars, as bloody and without uſe to his Kingdom, as cruel and unjuſt with reſpect to his unhappy Subjects, went at laſt to fall amidſt the Ruins of *Carthage*, where periſh'd with him, at leaſt, one half of a gallant Army, which he had tranſported from *France* into *Africk*.

One of the greateſt Miſchiefs which, in my Opinion, dear *Monceca*, can befall a Sovereign, is his paying any ſort of Attention to a Set of People, who,

void

void of all Knowledge in the Affairs of the World, are full of a wild as well as falſe Zeal for Religion; which induces them to approve and execute, as far as they can, the moſt extravagant Deſigns. A Man who has Capacity enough to direct thirty *Devotees*, may and muſt want the Talents neceſſary to govern a Kingdom. States are not regulated as Convents are, nor muſt we expect from Subjects what Superiors look for from their Monks. Yet how often have we ſeen Princes ſhrinking into the deſpicable character of Slaves to their Confeſſors, and learning at the feet of their Clergy what ought to be the fate of their People, 'till they became themſelves the mere Organs of a Monk or Prieſt? Among the Proteſtants, where the Clergy pretend to keep to their Inſtitution and to ſtick to their Duty, there are too many for directing their Maſters. What amazing Alterations in the Affairs of *England*, nay and of the Affairs of the High Allies, were produced by the political Sermons of one *Sacheverel*? Elſewhere have we not ſeen a certain Preacher, tolerably bright for a *Norman*, giving himſelf the Airs of a Stateſman, and treating cavalierly enough the evangelick Miniſtry? In a word, is it not generally remarked, that every where theſe People are but too well heard?

Happy is the Prince who knows how to make a right Choice of thoſe he honours with his Confidence. It is on that Choice his Glory and his Peace depend. How many Sovereigns ſtand diſtinguiſhed to Poſterity, who were perhaps but Men of moderate Parts, and would have appeared ſo, but for their Miniſters of State. The Epithet of *Great* ſo liberally beſtowed on Princes, would in moſt Caſes, if narrowly ſcann'd, belong rather to their Miniſters. Unaſſiſted by *Agrippa* and *Mecænas*, where ſhould we have placed *Au-*

guſtus? The Hiſtory of *Louis* XIII. what is it but the ſhining Acts of *Richelieu? Louis* XIV. was indeed a great King; but the *Condés*, the *Turennes*, as well as the *Louvois* and *Colberts*, had no ſmall Share in acquiring the Glories of his Reign. The Monarch now reigning in *France* hath a thouſand and a thouſand Virtues, worthy the Eſteem of remote Poſterity. He poſſeſſes above all, that Sweetneſs, that Benificence, that Wiſdom and Piety which rendered *Titus* the Maſter of the Hearts of Mankind. Theſe Qualifications are never the leſs his, on account of the Obligations he owes to that wiſe Miniſter he has choſen to direct his Councils. If *Burrhus* and *Seneca* had not been ſucceeded by *Narciſſus*, *Nero* had been always virtuous. It was the Minions of *Henry* III. miſ-led and ruined that unhappy Prince.

In all Situations of Life, evil Counſellors and wicked Acquaintance are dangerous. But they are ſtill more ſo to Princes. A private Man will find a thouſand Perſons ready to open his Eyes, by reproaching him with the wrong Steps into which bad Advice drew him, whereas Courtiers approve and applaud whatever the Prince does, be it ever ſo bad; ſo that he has no Reſource but to the Advice of ſome faithful Friend, to whom he accords the Liberty of ſpeaking freely. There are but few Princes wiſe enough to act thus, which is the Reaſon why there are few Princes who eſcape ſuffering by a contrary Conduct, and which is ſtill worſe, all their Faults recur on a Multitude of innocent People; who, tho' they have no part in their Offences, ſuffer for them *. The Errors of Princes are deſperate Scourges for their Subjects. The Plague is more merciful to Men

* *Quidquid delirant Reges plectuntur Achivi.*

than

than the mad Ambition of Princes to their Neighbours. Famine cannot reduce a Country ſo low as it may be brought by the Luxury and Vanity of a Prince criminally avaricious of what is the Produce of his Subjects Labours and Sweat, and prodigal at the ſame time of his own Revenue to a flattering Courtier, or ſome faithleſs Concubine. Rain, Storms, and Inundations do not miſchief People more than a Prince's idle Love, or the Penſions paid to corrupt the Miniſters of his Neighbours.

Happy are thoſe Nations where Monarchs ſtudy to act like tutelary Deities, by preſerving Peace and Abundance to their Subjects, without expecting they ſhould erect Temples in their Turns any where but in their Hearts. Such were the Sentiments of thoſe excellent Monarchs who ſeem born for the Good of Mankind, and who were anciently through Gratitude number'd with the Gods. Thoſe Heroes, who placed all Senſe of Greatneſs in the Good they did to others; what would they have thought if they had ſeen one King ſtiled *Great*, for deſtroying a whole People, and eſtabliſh his Glory on Rapine and Murder? Another *Magnificent*, for impoveriſhing his Subjects? And a third *Intrepid* for his Delight in Slaughter? They would have thought no doubt ſuch Titles very ill beſtowed.

Farewel, dear *Monceca*, live content and happy, and may the God of our Fathers bleſs thee with Abundance.

Lisbon.

LETTER CXLIX.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a Rabbi at* Conſtantinople.

I Wrote you ſome Days ago, my dear *Iſaac*, my Sentiments as to the Merits of the *Engliſh* Tragic Poets: I ſhall now proceed to give my Judgment on the Comic Writers. They ſeem to me to exceed thoſe I mentioned firſt a good deal. I went yeſterday to a Comedy, and I was very well ſatisfied with the Performance. The Characters were in Nature, the Plot well laid, the Style chaſte, *&c.* and which was much more important, the Moral was wholeſome and juſt, accompanied with a ſtrong, well-turned Vein of Humour. This Piece fell from the Pen of *Congreve*, the beſt, the wiſeſt, and the moſt modeſt of all the *Engliſh* Authors in this way. It had been well if *Wycherley* and *Vanbrugh* had wrote as perfectly. Their Works, to ſpeak the Truth, are full of bold Strokes, and abound with Wit, but they too often bear hard on Modeſty, and make the Stage an Engine of Corruption, whereas it ought to be a School of Morals.

It is without heſitation, my dear Friend, that I place the beſt Pieces of *Moliere* far above the Productions of *Wycherley*. Beſides their ſurpaſſing them in Delicacy, they alſo are exactly ſuited to the Decency which ought to appear in all publick Spectacles, in order to free them from any Dread

of

of thoſe too zealous Doctors ever burning with a ſtrong Inclination to decry them. The beſt Argument which we can poſſibly uſe in favour of the Theatre, is its Uſefulneſs in correcting Manners. The Spectacles or publick Repreſentations of the preſent Age are certainly adorned with Sentiments which render them very inſtructive. Few People of Rank are very attentive at Sermons, whereas at the Play-houſe they mind what is ſaid well enough. I dare ſay therefore, that *Moliere*'s Comedies have done more Service among the Courtiers, than the Sermons of *Bourdaloue* and *Maſſillon*. Without teizing you with Examples, do but remember how much Good was done by that ſingle Play of *Precieuſes ridicules*. But for that excellent Comedy, the *French*, and their Neighbours in Imitation of them, had to this day affected Manners ſtiff, impertinent, and unnatural, and had delivered themſelves up to an affected way of ſpeaking, which was the Mode for ſeveral Years among a Multitude of People. If we drive from the Stage that Modeſty which is a neceſſary part of good Manners: if inſtead of amending the Heart while we amuſe the Imagination, we do our utmoſt to corrupt both, by giving ſeducing Pictures of Vice, as in the little Entertainments of *Dancour* and other Pieces of the like Stamp; whatever Genius may appear in the Execution, we ought only to be regarded in the ſame Light with Poiſoners, who afford, if they can, an agreeable Flavour to make their mortal Drenches go the more eaſily down.

Wycherley ſeems to have collected with the utmoſt care the Subjects capable of admitting a criminal Intrigue; thoſe which did not admit one, he forced to that Purpoſe, and even ſuch Pieces as he purloin'd from *Moliere* he corrupted to his Taſte. That Comedy wherein he has made uſe

of *L'Ecole de Femmes*, though full of Fire, and by no means deficient in Wit, is yet far ſhort of the Wiſdom diſcoverable in his Model. Inſtead of *Moliere*'s Sagacity in making a future Husband riſque his Spouſe's Fidelity, and his Caution in avoiding any Expreſſion tending to a Breach of Decorum, *Wycherley* introduces a Man pretending to be a Eunuch, and letting all the World into the Secret of his Incapacity: The Husbands charmed with ſuch an innocent *Inamorato*, bring their Wives readily into his Company. The falſe *Origen* having made choice of a Country Lady, obtains of her the laſt Favours; and if, unluckily for the *Engliſh*, their comic Writers were not ſomewhat nicer than their tragic Poets, they might have in the concluſion of the Play a very fine Scene on the Stage, at leaſt in their way. There could not certainly be any thing in it more ſhocking or abſurd than in the introducing in a Tragedy a Husband ſtrangling his Wife with his own Hands, a Thing the *Engliſh* ſee not only without Horror, but with all the Marks of Admiration in the *Moor* of *Venice*.

One may venture to affirm, my Friend, that if the Writers of *Engliſh* Tragedies are to be juſtly charged with offending againſt the Rules of their Art, the comic Authors are not leſs culpable in reſpect to their Tranſgreſſions againſt Modeſty and good Manners. The latter are indeed more perfect in their way. *Wycherley* and *Vanbrugh* come nearer to *Terence* and *Moliere*, than *Dryden* and *Shakeſpear* to *Sophocles* and *Euripides*, *Corneille* and *Racine*. We ſometimes meet in their Works with Strokes bolder and more ſparkling than in the *Greek*, *Latin*, or *French* Poets; but the Luſtre of theſe fine Things is more than obſcured by long Paſſages utterly irreconcileable to Decency and

and Decorum, and wherein the Authors ſeem loſt to Shame.

Congreve's Pieces are the moſt perfect Comedies the *Engliſh* have. He is indeed a worthy Rival of the great *Moliere*, and hath perhaps fewer Faults than he. *Congreve* is exact, lively, prudent, cautious in his Expreſſions, and who never runs into low ridiculous Pleaſantries purely to keep up the Laugh. He is thoroughly acquainted with Mankind, and all his Characters are natural, full of Truth, and exceedingly ſtriking. If the *Engliſh* Comedies in general were as good as his, the Theatre of *London* would ſurpaſs that of *Paris*; but in the firſt place his Plays are but few, and in the next few of their Authors come near him.

The meaneſt of the comic Writers in this Country have a Cuſtom pleaſant enough. They pillage *Moliere*, they diſfigure his beſt Pieces, and criticiſe him with the utmoſt Inſolence. That Author is really as ill-treated in *England*, as *Homer*, *Virgil*, *Horace*, *&c.* by the Adverſaries of the Ancients. All the Dablers in *Parnaſſus* open againſt him as a common Enemy, and yet do their utmoſt to make their miſerable Pieces go off, by interlarding them with Sentiments ſtole from him; it is true they manage theſe ſo ſorrily, that if one was to form a Judgment of *Moliere* by the Samples they give us, we ſhould condemn that illuſtrious Writer without Mercy. But what Effect on his Reputation can the Attempts of theſe Blotters of Paper ever have, or what can a few Authors of miſerable damned Farces ſay to prejudice him? I am aſſured that *Congreve* has the higheſt Eſteem in the World for *Moliere*'s Writings, and no Poet of Eminence among the *Engliſh* ever decried his Plays. How is it poſſible to be ſo prejudiced, as not to be ſenſible of the

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Delicacy, the Salt, the good Senſe, which reigns in his *Tartuffe*, his *Miſanthrope*, his *School* of *Women*, and his *Learned Ladies*? *Corneille* and *Racine* never put Pen to Paper againſt *Sophocles* or *Euripides*. On the contrary, they gave thoſe Authors all the Praiſes they could beſtow. *Boileau* and *Pope* are zealous Advocates for the Honour of *Homer* and *Virgil*; is it not ſurprizing, that only the *Peraults*, the *Terraſſons*, and other ſecond-rate Authors ſhould form the ridiculous Deſign of tarniſhing the Glory of thoſe ancient Heroes? *Scarron*, *d'Aſſouci*, and *Marivaux*, who in attempting to traveſty *Virgil*, *Ovid*, and *Fenelon* have rendered themſelves ridiculous, are however far leſs blameable than theſe People, becauſe they had ſtill high Thoughts of their Originals, tho' they drew after them miſerable Copies.

It ſeems in the learned World a neceſſary Conſequence of attaining a certain Pitch of Reputation to be attacked by theſe *Zoilus's*, the Scum and Offscouring of Letters. I do not know, *Iſaac*, whether ever it might enter your Head to conſider the Number of bad Books written againſt the beſt Authors. There is not one, however eminent, who has eſcaped Criticiſm; and which is worſe, thoſe who venture to carp at them, do it as if they were every way their Superiors, and were taking to task the Works of *Bonnecorſe* or *Pradon*.

Not to ſpeak of the impertinent *Parallel between the Ancients and Moderns*, in which they have ſhewn leſs care to demonſtrate the Equality between the Ages of *Louis* XIV. and *Auguſtus*, than to injure the Characters of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, how many miſerable Criticiſms have we ſeen againſt the Tragedies of *Corneille*, *Racine*, *Crebillon*, and *Voltaire*? It is true, their Performances are applauded notwithſtanding, and theſe ſilly Attacks are

are forgot; yet it is ſtill true, that ſuch things were once publiſhed, and that there were not wanting Fools who admired them.

Is it not a certain Truth, that a Folio was publiſhed againſt *Bayle*'s Dictionary? It is owned that Men of Taſte laughed at the Attempt. However it was approved by ſome half-letter'd Folks, nor was the Contempt of good Judges ſufficient to hinder the Sale of this dull Piece among thoſe who buy at Random, and whoſe indigeſted Collections are not ſo properly *Bibliotheques* as *Bibliotaphs*. You muſt allow me this Word in order to expreſs a place where dead Books are buried.

A certain Monk * was weak enough to publiſh a Diſſertation full of Invectives againſt the *Characters of la Bruyere*. Some Numſculls had the Patience to read it, and others of their Brethren would ſtill afford it that Honour, if the Tranſlator of *Locke* had not taken the pains to exhibit the Nakedneſs of that Criticiſm to the Publick

Montaigne long after his Death ſuſtained the Spite of the *Janſeniſts*. Certainly his Works are in as much Eſteem as ever, while the Criticiſm would ſcarce be remembred if it was not taken notice of in the Preface to the laſt Editions of that Author's Eſſays.

Dr *Stillingfleet* wrote againſt *Locke*. By good luck his Criticiſm was never tranſlated; ſo that it was never known to a great part of *Europe*, otherwiſe it would without queſtion have had its Admirers.

The Fate of ſo many excellent Works hath almoſt induced me to believe it ought to be accounted one of the Marks of a good Book, that it hath been

* A *Carthuſian* who wrote under the *Nome de Guerre* of *Vigneul-Marville*.

criticized.

criticized. If this was certain, one would allow that the *Journaliſts* of *Trevoux* have for many Years paſt done the Labours of the *Janſeniſts* great Service, as well as to thoſe of Proteſtants and other Adverſaries, by not allowing one of them to be tolerable. In order to be even with them, I have often thought that inſtead of that fooliſh inſipid Thing called *Novelles Eccleſiaſtiques*, they ought to ſet up ſome kind of literary Journal, and therein tear without Mercy the fine Writings of *Petau*, *Sirmond*, *Bourdaloue*, *de la Rue*, *Daniel*, *&c.* and cry up the poor Performances of nameleſs Authors, who with all the Rage of Party abuſed the Society. But indubitably they have been diſcouraged from this by the bad Reception given to the *Journal de Trevoux*. They muſt have perceived that the Publick hath long diſregarded what is ſaid of many Books in that *Moliniſt Journal*, and conjectured from thence what Favour would be ſhewn to a *Janſeniſt* Collection in the ſame Taſte. They have therefore made it their Choice to bring out a weekly Sheet ſuited to the Genius of the Many, hoping by theſe Courſes thro' the open Country to do ſome miſchief to an Enemy poſſeſſed of all the Places of Strength. Happy for them that their Adverſaries have alſo run themſelves into Extravagancies, and thereby ruined their Credit, which would otherwiſe have been much better than that of the *Janſeniſts*. Infinite Numbers of Perſons of Judgment have been diſguſted, when on conſidering the Conduct of both Parties cloſely, they have been convinced that they are equally animated by Rage and Reſentment.

If we ſpeak the Truth, dear *Iſaac*, we muſt confeſs that when one reflects coolly on the Tranſactions in the Republick of Letters, one is provoked

voked to ſee how little Sincerity appears, and how much Injuſtice and Partiality is evident in the Criticiſms and Deciſions of the Learned, in regard to the Writings of their Adverſaries.

Fare thee well, my dear Friend, live content and happy, and never embaraſs thyſelf with captious or teſty People.

LETTER CL.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

THE greateſt Philoſophers fall ſometimes, dear *Iſaac*, into the ſame Faults and Puerilities with which they reproach their Adverſaries. They forget thoſe Principles on which they eſtabliſh their own Arguments againſt ſcholaſtic Chimæras. They affect to eſtabliſh ſuch ſtrange Opinions, and to explain ſuch inexplicable Things, that we turn, with Juſtice, upon themſelves their Criticiſms on certain Authors whom they have treated with ſovereign Contempt.

Obſerve, my Friend, how *Mallebranche* hath explained himſelf on the bold and yet ill-founded Deciſions of *Ariſtotle*. *Certainly an extraordinary meaſure of Faith is neceſſary in order to credit what* Ariſtotle *thus advances when he affords only Logical Proofs, and when he explains the Effects of Nature no otherwiſe than by the confuſed Notions of Senſe, eſpecially when he decides roundly on Queſtions which ſeem above human reach. He therefore tells us, very often as well as peremptorily, that*

that we are to take his Word, it being a ſettled Point with this Author, that a Diſciple is to believe. *

What think you, my dear *Iſaac*, of a Philoſopher who condemns ſo expreſly, ſuch as advance Opinions which they can neither prove nor explain clearly, and yet decides, with an air of Authority, on the Cauſe of Evil with reſpect to Mankind, and explains philoſophically the Juſtice of the Deity with regard to the Damnation of Children, which ſome *Nazarenes* hold inevitable tho' they die in the Cradle, if they have not gone thro' a certain Ceremony which is equivalent to Circumciſion amongſt us. If *Mallebranche* had ſaid ſimply what every Man of Senſe ought to ſay, that he ſubmitted the Lights he derived from Nature to the Dictates of Faith, according to the Notions entertained of ſuch Myſteries by his Church, and had alledged he believed that Children were damned, even who died in their Cradles, becauſe he apprehended it to be ſo revealed, and therefore received it as an Article of Faith, he would have merited Praiſe for knowing how to ſet bounds to human Curioſity; but inſtead of this, he has gone further than ever *Ariſtotle* did, whom he reproaches, and has ſaid more extravagant Things, and attempted to explain more unintelligible Myſteries in four Lines than the *Greek* Philoſopher has diſcovered in his eight Books of Phyſicks.

Behold, my Friend, the pompous and ſublime *Galimatias*, by which *Mallebranche* would prove that it is reconcilable to the Divine Juſtice to puniſh an Infant for a Sin in which it had no part. *A Mother*, ſays this Philoſopher, *whoſe Brain is full of Traces which muſt have been left by Objects introduced by the Senſes, and which ſhe could not efface by reaſon of the Concupiſcence reigning in her, as having not Power*

* *Mallebranche*. Recherche de la Verité. *Livr.* ii. *pag.* 18.

ever

over her Body, communicates them to her Child, who, ſpringing from her is a Sinner tho' ſhe herſelf may be juſt. The Mother is juſt becauſe ſhe actually loves or hath loved God by choice, neither doth Concupiſcence render her criminal tho' ſhe may have followed its Motions in Sleep. But the Infant ſhe carries having never loved God by choice, nor ever turned its Heart towards him, it is moſt evidently in Diſorder and Blindneſs, nor can there be any thing in it but what is worthy of his Wrath.

I don't know whether you obſerve that all theſe ſublime Illuſions are reducible to this: A Mother brings forth a Son a Sinner, becauſe ſhe communicates to him the Concupiſcence, of which ſhe is guilty. She hath however a power of delivering herſelf, becauſe ſhe is at liberty to uſe her Reaſon and to love the Deity; whereas her Son ought to be damned, as not having the Faculty of reflecting on himſelf, and the power of loving God.

Do you not perceive a fine Chain of Reaſoning flowing from excellent Principles? I will, for a Moment, ſuppoſe myſelf that *Ariſtotle*, whom *Mallebranche* has ſo grievouſly inſulted. *Tell me*, would I ſay to him, *thou* French *Metaphyſician, who inform'd you that a Mother could communicate to a Creature incapable of Reflection, concupiſcent Deſires, which ought to render it miſerable? What Proofs have you that it is conſiſtent with God's Juſtice to puniſh an Innocent for a Fault committed without its Knowledge, and alſo thro' Neceſſity? Be pleaſed, if you think it poſſible, to ſhew me how an Infant in its Mother's Womb can reſiſt the Impreſſions it receives from her? If then it is incapable of Reſiſtance and is obliged to follow the general Laws of Nature, is it not ridiculous to ſay that it is puniſhed for doing what was neceſſary for it to do? I would rather chuſe to ſay that a Child becomes a Sinner after it is born, by ſucking the Milk of*

a Nurſe who is a Sinner, than to aſcribe it to the Impreſſion made thereon in its Mother's Womb. The firſt of theſe Poſitions is leſs repugnant to good Senſe, becauſe a Child may live without ſucking, but not without feeling the Motions communicable by his Mother while he remains within her.

You muſt own, my good Friend, this is a pleaſant way of explaining the Source of human Miſery. What would the ancient *Greek* Philoſophers ſay could they return to Life again, to thoſe *French* Wits who have dealt with them ſo ſharply, and who are yet for explaining Original Sin as ſome Phyſicians account for the Marks or Blemiſhes with which Children are born.

The Concluſion drawn by *Mallebranche* is ſtill more abſurd than the Principle from which he draws it; after ſhewing the Manner in which Infants become Criminals, he concludes, that not having the Power of knowing God, and of conſequence of repenting and ſeeing their Faults, it is but juſt they ſhould be damned.

Is there any thing more extraordinary than to ſuppoſe what is ſo oppoſite to any rational Idea of God, that he ſhould puniſh ſuch Creatures of his as have not only no power of reſiſting Sin or of repenting of it, but which is much worſe, have really no uſe of Reaſon, and act only by a kind of Inſtinct? For I cannot apprehend, that even Father *Mallebranche* would aſſert that a Child in the Womb ought to be a Doctor of the *Sorbonne*, and in conſequence thereof, know *that one who loves not God by a Love of Choice, and whoſe Heart is not turned towards the Deity, is not in any other State than that of Diſorder and Blindneſs, and in which there is nothing but what merits the Wrath of God.* An Infant is ignorant of all this, even many Years after its Birth How then ſhould it have any ſuch Ideas in its Mother's

Mother's Womb? If then it has no ſort of Notion either of Good or Evil, and its Soul, tho' of a ſpiritual Nature acts as yet, but as the Germ in a Plant, is there not a viſible Abſurdity in ſaying it is puniſhed on account of the Matter which ſerves for its Aliment?

When certain *Nazarene* Doctors attempt to give Philoſophical Reaſons in ſupport of this Doctrine, I fancy to myſelf ſo many Fools arguing for the cutting down of Orange-Trees, becauſe the Gardner who planted them had done ſomething amiſs. A Man of Learning muſt lay his Account with ſaying very ſilly Things, when he will, by the Light of his Reaſon, endeavour to explain Points of pure Revelation. By it we are directed to believe Myſteries. Let us believe them then without allowing Reaſon, under pretence of explaining, to render them incredible by making them appear abſurd.

It is however certain, that if we embrace this Sentiment, it brings along with it great Difficulties. *If one ought*, it will be ſaid, *to ſubmit blindly to what we are aſſured has been revealed, there is nothing but may be ſupported by Revelation. In all Religions, in the* Jewiſh, *the* Nazarene, *the* Mohammedan, *the moſt abſurd Chimæras are received. How many ridiculous things do many of the Rabbies, an infinite Number of* Chriſtian *Divines, and Multitudes of Derviſes and other* Turkiſh *Enthuſiaſts, pretend to have been poſitively revealed?* To this I anſwer, that we ought to examine carefully if a Thing hath been reveal'd or not. But I ſay, that this Inquiry finiſhed and we thoroughly aſſured that a Thing hath beenrevealed, there remains no more room for Doubts about it.

When I aſſert that a *Jew* ſhould ſubmit his Underſtanding to Revelation, I do not mean that he ſhould receive and adopt all the Notions of the Rabbies as

ſo

ſo many Articles of Faith; if they attempt to impoſe on him an Error, let him, as ſoon as he has ſeriouſly and thoroughly conſidered, reject it. But if any Doubts enter his Mind, as to Facts recorded in the Holy Scriptures, the Authenticity of thoſe Books and their Revelation ſhould incline him to humble himſelf and to receive them implicitly, without ſeeking by human Reaſons to explain divine Myſteries; leſt, by ſharing the preſumptuous Folly of *Mallebranche* in ſuch an Undertaking, he ſhould, as he inevitably muſt, expoſe himſelf to thoſe Reproaches which are very juſtly beſtowed on that vain Philoſopher.

I return, my dear *Iſaac*, to my firſt Idea. Is it not very ſurprising that a great Genius, an Author of the firſt Claſs, who ſees ſo clearly the Giddineſs of another Writer and his groſs Miſtakes as to refute them invincibly, ſhould nevertheleſs fall immediately after into the ſame Errors, without perceiving that he acted therein directly oppoſite to his own Principles, or at leaſt to thoſe on which it became, in his Opinion, a Philoſopher to argue? Such a deplorable Blindneſs is a very ſenſible Proof of the Weakneſs of Human Underſtanding, and of that fooliſh Prejudice a Man is apt to entertain for whatever comes from himſelf; he fancies there is nothing hid beyond his reach, yet he condemns others for having attempted to explain unintelligible Things; but fancies, at the ſame time, a Power in himſelf of ſucceeding even in thoſe things which he cenſured others for attempting. Moſt of our Modern Philoſophers, and the Metaphyſicians eſpecially, have done nothing but added new Miſtakes to thoſe which the Ancients left behind them, and for which they inſulted them ſo groſly, as themſelves will be, in proceſs of time, by their Succeſſors, who probably will do nothing more than augment the

the Doubts and Incertainties with which Philoſophy is already encumbred.

To me it ſeems probable that the outrageous Criticiſms of each other's Syſtems which the Philoſophers daily publiſh, are the juſt Puniſhments of their Pride. To this I am the rather led, becauſe I have always obſerved, that in the ſame Proportion a Man is vain of his Diſcoveries, his Enemy contemns them. The Fate of *Ariſtotle* of late is little better than that of *Cotin* and *Pradon*. The *Carteſians* have carried their Averſion to exceſs, they take no pains to diſtinguiſh the good from the bad, but condemn, without diſtinction, all the Works of the *Greek* Philoſopher, tho' there are abundance of uſeful things in them. If the great Tutor of *Alexander* were to reviſit the World, he would be ſurprized to ſee his Works, which made formerly ſuch a noiſe, now valued only by a few Monks. His ſingle Conſolation would be, to ſee the ſame Fate attend his two great Antagoniſts *Deſcartes* and *Mallebranche*, whoſe Works grow daily into Diſcredit. The Prudence, the Sincerity, the Candor, the Penetration of thoſe of *Locke*, have drawn all the wiſer part of the Logicians and Metaphyſicians to his Party; on the other hand, thoſe who ſtudy Phyſics are all become Diſciples of *Newton*. And the extraordinary Modeſty with which theſe two Philoſophers have delivered their Opinions, will effectually ſecure them from a like reverſe of Fortune.

Adieu, dear *Iſaac*, may the God of our Fathers continue to heap on thee his Bleſſings.

LETTER CLI.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, heretofore a Rabbi at* Conſtantinople.

I Have met, dear *Iſaac*, here in *England*, with a Cabaliſt, whom I firſt became acquainted with at *Hamburgh*. After complimenting him on his ſafe Arrival, I intreated him to allow me the Honour of converſing with him ſome time during his Stay in this City. *I give you my Conſent*, ſaid he, *with a great deal of Pleaſure to what you deſire, and I promiſe you that I will not conceal from you any of the Myſteries of our Art.* Charmed with ſo frank an Offer, as well as with the Opportunity of knowing whether there was any thing real in that Science or no, I thanked him in the warmeſt and tendereſt manner Words would permit. *I am willing*, continued he, *to begin this very Day to explain to you the firſt Principles of Hermetick Philoſophy. Let us go take a Walk in ſome proper Place, where we need apprehend no Interruption* I readily followed my new Maſter, and took a Seat with him in the Corner of a publick Garden, which is ſo far from being over-frequented, that it ſometimes looks like a Deſart.

We were hardly ſet down when the Cabbaliſt lifted his Eyes to Heaven, kept ſilence for ſome Minutes, and ſeemed to be wrapt in a profound Contemplation. Then coming to himſelf again, he

he fetched a deep Sigh, aſking me if I had never read any Books treating of their Art? I anſwered him, that I had looked over ſeveral, but that I found them ſo obſcure, that they had abſolutely deprived me of all Hopes of being able to find out their Senſe. At theſe Words the Cabbaliſt fetched another deep Sigh. "See, ſaid he, the "ſad Effects of the Wickedneſs of Men. The "Sages are obliged to veil, and to conceal the "Knowledge of the Treaſures which they poſſeſs "even from Men of worth, who ought to "participate of them, through a Fear that wic-"ked and prophane People ſhould make uſe of "their Writings. All the learned Secretaries of "Nature have therefore choſen to write ſo ob-"ſcurely as to render it ſimply impoſſible to pe-"netrate the Meaning of their Diſcourſes, unleſs "enlightened by the Holy Spirit, or by ſome Ma-"ſter of the Art. Inſomuch that theſe illuſtrious "Philoſophers plainly avow, that they write not "for all ſorts of Readers, but for the choſen "Scholars of the golden Doctrine*. *Agmon*, the "great *Agmon*, towards the End of the *Turb* †, "delivers himſelf thus. *If we had not multi-*"*plied the Names of the Art, and taken Pains to*

* See the Proem to the Introduction, or School of the tranſmuting metallick Philoſophy, by *David de Planis Campy*, *p.* 1.

† The *Turb* is a Collection of all the Viſions which they ridiculouſly aſcribe to the ancient Philoſophers whom they ſuppoſe to have been acquainted with the Art of making Gold, among whom they reckon *Ariſtotle*, *Socrates*, and *Pythagoras*. In this Book alſo are contained all the Follies of the Cabbaliſts. The *Turb* is in ſhort the Talmud and the Alcoran of the Artiſts, and contains yet more abſurd Things than thoſe Collections of extravagant Fables.

obſcure

" *obſcure it, our Scholars had by this time prophaned*
" *it, and brought it into Contempt. If I,* ſays the
" illuſtrious *Raſis, was to reveal its Myſteries,*
" *there would be no longer any Difference between*
" *the Sage and the Simple. The Almighty,* as *Ra-*
" *ſon* writes in the ſame Book, *hath obliged the*
" *Philoſophers not to teach this Art to the Vulgar,*
" *leſt the World ſhould periſh. For this cauſe the*
" *Philoſophers have carefully concealed that precious*
" *Medicine, becauſe it enlivens and conſerves all*
" *Things in an equal Temperament. For if all*
" *Men were alike rich, none would obey others,*
" *there would be no longer either Rule or Order in*
" *the World.*

" Theſe Reaſons, continued the Cabbaliſt, are
" as you ſee ſo eſſential, that the Philoſophers are
" tied down by them not to write but in this ob-
" ſcure Manner, and ſo as only to be underſtood
" by ſuch as are initiated in the ſacred Myſteries.
" But that which is a farther Check, and binds
" them to a ſtill cloſer Silence, is the barbarous
" and inhuman Treatment ſuch Men have met
" with, as through a fatal Eaſineſs have been in
" this reſpect guilty of ſome Indiſcretion. There
" are a Multitude of tragical Hiſtories whence
" Examples of this ſort might be drawn. The
" unfortunate Hermit who truſted *Braggardin* died
" by the Hand of that Robber. *Richard* the
" *Engliſhman*, who confided his Secret to a King
" of that Country, was put to death in the
" Tower. You ſee then, how much the Philo-
" ſophers are intereſted in the Obſervation of this
" Rule, of either keeping a profound Silence, or
" ſpeaking in a Language intelligible only to
" their Diſciples."

To what End then, ſaid I, *do you write Books upon your Art, ſince they are intelligible only to ſuch*

as

as have no need of them, becauſe they already know what they contain. You ought, I think, to avoid publiſhing Books which ſerve only to make Fools of Men of avaricious Tempers, and to reduce them to an extreme Poverty; the juſt Chaſtiſement of their not being content with moderate Wealth, ſufficient for the Supply of their Neceſſities.

" I perceive clearly, ſaid my new Maſter, that " you look upon the Books of our Science, to " be much more unintelligible than they really " are. For you muſt know, that tho' our Wri- " tings are very obſcure, yet it is not however " impoſſible, through the Aſſiſtance of God, with- " out which Men cannot do any thing, to reach " their ſecret Meaning, and to come at the true " Senſe of all their Enigmas. It is this that I " ſhall make you clearly apprehend, by giving " you the Key of each different Style in which " our Philoſophers write. But in order to make " this Matter the more eaſy, I will firſt diſcover " without Diſguiſe the fundamental Principle of " our Philoſophy.

" When the Eternal Being, continued the Cab- " baliſt, created the Univerſe, he divided the Wa- " ters from the Waters. He then ſeparated the " purer Part of theſe into three Portions. Of the " firſt and moſt perfect Part, he made whatſo- " ever exiſts above the Firmament; of the ſecond " the Firmament it ſelf, the Planets, Stars, and " all that is therein; of the third, he compoſed " the four Elements, through which he diffuſed " the Spirit of Life, which ought to be regarded " as a fifth Element, the Principle, the Seed, the " Ligament, the operating Virtue, by which the " whole Univerſe is kept together. It is this " fifth Element of which the Generality of Men " are ignorant, that the true Philoſophers call the

" *Universal Spirit, Natural Magick, the Quintes-*
" *sence, the Elixir, Aurum potabile, the Stone, Mer-*
" *cury, Azoth, Water, Fire, Dew, &c.* They
" make use of so many different Names, the better
" to cover their Secrets; but however it is also
" true, that each of these different Denomina-
" tions suits perfectly well the Thing intended
" thereby. When they call this the *Quintessence,*
" it is because it is the Result of the Assemblage
" of the *Four Elements.* When they ascribe to it
" the Name of the *Elixir,* it is on account of its
" admirable Properties in preserving Life, and
" freeing Men from all Diseases. The Title
" of *Aurum potabile* is given it, because it
" is excellent as Gold. It must also be observed,
" that these Philosophers do not contradict them-
" selves in asserting that their Matter is *vegetable,*
" *animal,* and *mineral.* For as the universal
" Spirit or fifth Element could not subsist with-
" out some sort of Body; and as on the other
" hand, no Body can subsist without Life, it is
" diffused through all the different Elements; so
" that the vegetable, the animal, the mineral
" Faculty, are each of them properly ascribed
" thereto. All the Secret of the Art then consists
" in this, the Capacity of finding the *vital Spirit,*
" and putting it into a Condition to act freely on
" any Body. For abounding in Heat, it clears,
" purifies, and in the end certainly performs the
" grand Operation.

" The wise Philosophers who have written on
" the Method of extracting, or of drawing out
" of other Elements this prolifick and vivifying
" Seed, have employed different Methods of Ex-
" plication, alike dark and obscure, and these are
" called *the Styles. Merlin* made use of the *alle-*
" *gorick,* King *Arthur* of the *parabolick,* the great

Hermes

" *Hermes* of *problematick*, *Arſileus* of the *typical*,
" *Balgus* and the *Coſmopolite* of the *Enigmatick*.
" With reſpect to theſe different Methods, or, as
" we phraſe it, the Interpretation of the Styles,
" the Key of the two firſt will ſuffice to render
" the Knowledge of the reſt eaſy.

" *Merlin*, ſpeaking in the allegorick Style, pro-
" ceeds thus: *A King having drank of the Water*
" *could not mount his Horſe*, i. e. *by a proper Mixture*
" *of Water and Earth, the Matter is rendred fluid.*
" He then proceeds; *The King having taken a Me-*
" *dicine compoſed of Sal Armoniack and Nitre, was*
" *found dead. By which he would inſinuate that*
" *by the Means of the ſpecifick Projection, or of*
" *the Spirit extracted from the Elements, the li-*
" *quid Matter was fixed and converted into Gold,*
" *the Fire of the Furnace having conſumed all the*
" *Humidity.*

" The *Enigmatick* Style, which is that made
" uſe of by *Balgus* and the *Coſmopolite*, is as ob-
" ſcure as the allegorick for thoſe who are un-
" acquainted with this *fifth* Element; this *Salt* or
" this *Spirit* which I have told you is the true
" Powder of Projection. For inſtance; *Look*, ſay
" they, *upon an Infant that ſucks, and be not*
" *troubled, for there lies the Secret of the Art.*
" Theſe Words ſignify, *That we muſt purify the*
" *active and the paſſive Matter, the Sulphur and*
" *the Mercury, by a Fire which muſt be managed*
" *with Care, and which we muſt augment in the*
" *ſame manner as we encreaſe the Portions of*
" *Aliment given to Children as they attain to riper*
" *Years.*

" You now ſee, continued the Cabbaliſt, that
" the Writings of the Sages are not abſolutely un-
" intelligible to ſuch as are initiated in the My-
" ſteries of which they treat, and that they have

" Reaſon to take the Precautions they do for the " better concealing their Secrets from the Pro- " phane."

I ſhall readily, returned I, *admit of the Obſcurity for which your Philoſophers contend, becauſe they ſay it is ſo neceſſary to them. But I have ſtill a great Doubt upon me; I can hardly bring myſelf to believe that any of them have carried Matters ſo far, as actually to extract this vivifying Salt from the other Elements. I think alſo that they have never made Gold, notwithſtanding their boaſting of that Art. You, for Example, who are one of their moſt famous Diſciples, do you know the Secret of extracting this Spirit of Life; this Powder of Projection, which is abſolutely neceſſary to the Work of Tranſmutation?*

" Such, replied the Cabbaliſt, as are acquaint- " ed with the Manner of working, are yet at a " great diſtance from the Completion of the great " Work. One finds not in a whole Age above " one or two Perſons fortunate enough to direct " their Fire with that Juſtice as to arrive at the " great End of the Art. The ſmalleſt Exceſs or " Deficiency in Heat is ſufficient to defeat the " Labour of twenty or of thirty Years, and what " Knowledge ſoever a Man has, it is God alone " who can prevent certain Accidents which are " too frequent for all human Precautions; this " is the Reaſon why among ſo many of the Sages, " ſo few have fully ſucceeded *. I muſt even ac- " knowledge

* The Chymiſts compare the Difficulties attending the Search of the Philoſopher's Stone to thoſe encountred by *Jaſon*, in his looking for the Golden Fleece. They pretend that it is not till after a long and laboured Purſuit, that we arrive at length at the great, the important

" knowledge to you, that tho' I have revealed " the moſt hidden Myſteries of the Art, I would " by no means adviſe you to apply yourſelf to " it; nay, if I had not long ago embraced, I " ſhould not at this day have choſen it prefer- " rable to many other Occupations. I muſt tell " you, that I have already conſumed very con- " ſiderable Sums, but tho' I have not reached " the Art of making Gold, I have diſcovered " many other Secrets that have recompenſed my

important Secret. As alſo that ſuch as are unable to bear Fatigue and Diſappointments, ought to forbear the Search of the Philoſophick Tranſmutation. This Caution is of mighty uſe in conducting to their utter Ruin ſuch as ſeek to make Gold. *Alii ſunt paululum doctiores, humaniores, & ratione inſaniunt, qui arbitrantur lapidem ità a Naturâ effectum, ut abſque omni labore, & ſine præparatione, metallis violenter paucis Temporis minutis, alias & novas formas induere valeat. Hoc eſt, ſi quis lapidem habeat, ipſum poſſe ſtatim quævis metalla transformare: quæ tamen cerdonica indoctaque imperitiſſimi Vulgi opinio, re ipſa, falſa, vana & nullis fundamentis, repugnat evidentiſſimis Philoſophorum Argumentis & Rationibus. Poetæ, Deorum Filii, exemplo Jaſonis docent, quanti ſit laboris ante quàm tantum rem liceat auferre. Oportet prudentiſſimis conſiliariis, ſive deliberationibus & conſiliis exquiſitis rem aggredi, diu navigare, ac ubi tandem ex Mari perveneris in terram, materiam ſolidam, conſtantem & fixam, arte vera tanquam Medeâ, ſolis filii Terram aëripedibus Tauris adamenteo jugo junctis, qui flammas ex naribus ſpirant, arare, ac in eam Terram ex Galeâ Draconis dentes ſeminare ex quibus, Hoſtes natos miris armis inſtructos interficere, Lapide in medio projecto, de quo certabunt inter ſe, Draconi truculentiſſimo inducere ſomnum, quibus cunctis ſummo labore & diligentia peractis, patet Aditus in Martis Templum ad aureum vellus.* Epiſtola ad Fuggeros, p. 51, & 52.

" Pains, and encouraged me to purſue my Enter-
" prize."

It would then, replied I, *be in vain for me to perſuade you to quit ſo deceitful a Study. I will not then offer to tell you what you muſt many Times in your cooler Moments have told yourſelf. But I ſhall at all times be grateful for your Complaiſance towards me, and ſhall hear with Pleaſure whatever you ſhall think fit further to communicate of your Secrets. With theſe Words I took Leave of the Chymiſt, who repeated to me his Promiſe of communicating whatſoever he found curious.*

How great ſoever, my dear *Iſaac*, the Folly may be of the Cabbaliſts, and Lovers of ſublime Chemiſtry, it muſt however be acknowledged, that the World is much indebted to them for a Multitude of Diſcoveries in experimental Phyſicks. For in ſearching their fifth Element, and imaginary Powder of Projection, they have diſcovered the Methods by which vitriolick and metallick Fluids coagulate in the Entrails of the Earth, and form there Minerals, Metals, and Stones, according to the different Kinds of Matter on which they act. Chemiſtry has given us alſo a ſenſible Idea by its Fermentations and Sublimations of the Vegetation of Plants, and the Growth of Animals. From its Diſtillations we learn how the Sun after having rarified the Waters of the Sea, or of Rivers, draws them into the Air where they form Clouds, and again fall down in Rain or Dew. So many Diſcoveries for which we are indebted to the Studies of the Chemiſts, ought to endear to true Philoſophers the vain Reſearches of the Cabbaliſts, and pretended Sages, of whoſe Extravagance and Folly, they make ſuch wiſe and rofitable Uſes.

Fare-

Farewel, dear *Iſaac*, live happy and content, and take Care not to embarraſs your ſelf by ſearching after the Philoſopher's Stone.

London.

LETTER CLII.

AARON MONCECA *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

THERE is no Nation, dear *Iſaac*, exempt from ſome falſe Step or other; the *French* blame the *Engliſh* for having unjuſtly burnt *Joan* of *Arc*, commonly called the *Maid* of *Orleans*, for no other Crime than that ſhe had faithfully ſerved her Prince and Country. They ſay, farther to palliate this Injuſtice done to the illuſtrious *French* Woman, they have had Recourſe to Fraud and Falſhood, and moſt ridiculouſly charged her with Conjuring and Witchcraft.

The *Engliſh* agree at this Day, that their Anceſtors were in the wrong to act ſo contrary to the Laws of Equity and of War; they aſſert that the *Maid* of *Orleans*, whom the *French* Hiſtorians, generally ſpeaking, treat as a Saint, was in reality no more than a bold, enterprizing, high-ſpirited Woman, of whom the Courtiers of *Charles* VII. made uſe to re-eſtabliſh the Affairs of the Kingdom, and to diſpel that Panick with which the Soldiers had been ſeized.

This Diverſity of Opinions in the *French* and *Engliſh* Hiſtorians, begat in me a Curioſity of going to the bottom of this Hiſtory, and of bringing the Truth to Light, notwithſtanding the Miſts

with which it is covered. *Paſquier*, an Author by no means to be ſuſpected of favouring Superſtition, hath given us an exact Detail of the Proceſs againſt *Joan de Arc*, whom he looks upon as a Saint, and whoſe Memory he has warmly defended. If on examining the Proofs which he brings in order to demonſtrate the pretended Revelation made to this *Joan*, their Falſity can be clearly made appear, one may ſafely affirm, that Heaven had nothing to do, ſtrictly to ſay, with the Tranſactions of that Woman; and one may allow, that the *Engliſh* at this Day are in the right in alledging ſhe was an Inſtrument made uſe of by the Counſellors and Generals of *Charles* VII. Let me beſeech you, my Friend, to reflect attentively on the Reaſons alledged by *Paſquier*, as thoſe which led him to believe the Maid of *Orleans* a Saint, and I perſuade myſelf that you will quickly ſee through them.

It is a great pity *, ſays my Author, *never did any Perſon ſuccour* France *ſo opportunely, and ſo happily as this Maid, and never was the Memory of any Woman ſo torn, and diſhonoured as hers has been. The* Engliſh *looked upon her as a Heretick and a Witch, in which Light they burnt her. Some of our Writers have ſuggeſted, that ſhe was an artful Woman, ſuch a one as* Numa Pompilius *paſſed upon the* Romans *for a Nymph, in order to render himſelf more reſpected by the People; and this is the Opinion of* Langy *in the third Book and third Chapter of his* Military Diſcipline. *To this others have added, that the* French *Lords engaged this Wench to act as ſhe did, and to feign that ſhe was ſent by God in order to ſuccour the Kingdom; they alſo affirm, that at* Chinon, *where ſhe diſtinguiſhed King* Charles *amidſt the Croud that attended him, ſhe was aſſiſted by a certain Signal given*

* *Recherches de Paſquier*, lib. vi. chap. 5.

Let

her by her Confederates. Nay, ſome have been ſo baſe and impudent as to ſuggeſt that one Captain Baudricourt *debauched her, and finding her to have a very ſharp Wit, put her upon this Action.*

You muſt obſerve, *Iſaac*, that even in the time this Tranſaction happened, the Truth of her Divine Miſſion was very much doubted, and that this Opinion ſpread and prevailed by degrees. In the Age wherein *Paſquier* wrote, moſt People gave no ſort of Credit to the Holineſs of *Joan de Arc*, or to her Wiſdom; but on the contrary, were perſuaded that all her Pretences to Inſpiration were founded in the Secrets revealed to her by *Baudricourt*.

As to the Manners of this young Woman, I readily agree with *Paſquier*, that they were above Reproach. The Proof he has given us, hath the Appearance of Truth. *Her Chaſtity ſhe maintained*, ſaid he, *to her Death, even in the midſt of the Troops.* It is certain that the *Engliſh*, who ſought by a thouſand Methods to defame her, in order to cover that Severity with which they proceeded againſt her, would not have failed to mention her Incontinence, if any Teſtimony thereof had been in their power, and yet there is nothing of this ſort in her Proceſs. But what of all this? It may prove the Chaſtity indeed, but it cannot prove the Sanctity of *Joan de Arc*. In admitting that *Baudricourt* did not debauch her, it no way follows that ſhe had a divine Revelation; I do not think that being a Maid, includes the Character of a Propheteſs and Deliverer of Nations. I ſhall agree with the *French* Hiſtorians that *Joan of Arc* never had a Baſtard, but then I concur with the *Engliſh* Authors in aſſerting that her pretended Miſſion was a downright Impoſture. In order to be convinc'd of this, we need only hear what *Paſquier* ſays, who would fain have her canoniz'd. *I ſhall*, ſays he,

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run over the principal Articles on which Joan of Arc *was interrogated. Being asked as to her Name, ſhe ſaid, that in her own Country ſhe was called* Jeannette, *but ſince ſhe liv'd in* France *ſhe hath been called* Joan of Arc, *of the Village of* Domprez; *that her Father's Name is* James Arc, *and her Mother's* Iſabella; *that the Name of one of her Godfathers is* John Lingue, *and of the other,* John Berry; *that one of her Godmother's Names was* Jane, *the Name of another* Agnes, *and of another* Sibill, *and that ſhe had heard her Mother ſay ſhe had ſome others; that at this time ſhe was about twenty-nine Years of Age, that ſhe was, by Profeſſion a Sempſtreſs, and not a Shepherdeſs; that ſhe went once a Year to Confeſſion, and ſhe had frequently heard a Voice from Heaven, that it was remarkably clear and ſtrong, and that ſhe took it for the Voice of an Angel, that it admoniſhed her to go into* France, *where ſhe ſhould raiſe the Siege of* Orleans, *and that if ſhe went to Captain* Robert de Baudricourt, *he would grant her an Eſcort to conduct her thither, which accordingly he did.*

I fancy, dear *Iſaac*, that if I had not admitted the Virginity of our Heroine, I might have compared her Story to the Tale of Brother *Lucius*, which the ingenious *La Fontaine* hath put into Verſe. Do not you think that Captain *Baudricourt* acted a little like the Hermit in that Story, who in a Voice like Thunder cry'd out, Good Woman, carry your Daughter to the Servant of God, for between him and her there ſhall come a Child who will one day become a great Pope. I know very well that *Baudricourt* acted in this Caſe from another Motive diſtinct from Brother *Lucius*; it was Policy, and not Love, that played off this Scene. Taken in this Light, the Maid herſelf might have been deceived into the Part ſhe acted, but her ſubſequent Conduct ſhews that ſhe was very well acquainted with the Deſign

ſhe was to ſerve, and knew perfectly well how to play her Game. She was extremely deſirous of paſſing for a a Saint and a Heroine, and without all doubt, ſhe acted her Part beyond Compariſon.

I muſt tell you, my Friend, a pleaſant Notion that is juſt ſtruck into my Head. I think I diſcover a ſtrong Reſemblance between *Joan of Arc* and *La Cadiere*; the one had in view the Defeat of the *Engliſh*, and the other of the Jeſuits; both intended to cheat the Public and to paſs for Saints, each of them pretended to a perfect Acquaintance with Heaven and with the Bleſſed. As for our Maid, ſhe pretended to have Revelations from the Deity. For Inſtance, it is is ſaid in her Proceſs, *She aſſerts that ſhe knows God, loves the Duke of* Orleans, *and that ſhe had had more Revelations in reſpect to him, than to any other Man living, except the Perſon whom ſhe calls her King.* *

You ſee, dear *Iſaac*, that the Supreme Being communicated his Secrets to this Saint, as ſhe ſaid. We ſhall next ſee what care was taken to provide faithful Meſſengers; it was ſhe herſelf informed her Judges of this Particular.

Being interrogated whether ſhe had heard a Voice, ſhe anſwered, Yeſterday I heard it three times; firſt in the Morning, then about the Time of Veſpers, and the third time in the Night. Being asked if ſhe had ever ſeen any Fairies, ſhe anſwered no; but that a Godmother of hers had boaſted of ſeeing them at the Fairies Tree, in a little Copſe not far from their Village of Dompre.

Being asked who they were that ſpoke to her, ſhe anſwered St. Catherine *and St.* Margaret, *whom ſhe had often ſeen and touched, even ſince her being in Priſon, and kiſſed the Ground whereon they trod; that*

* *Item dixit, quòd benè ſcit, quod Deus diligit Ducem Aurelianenſem; ac etiam plures Revelationes de ipſo habuerat, quàm de alio homine vivente, excepto illo quem dixit Regem ſuum.*

ſhe asked them their Advice on each Examination, and that ſhe had aſſumed the Habit of a Man at their expreſs Command.

Was I in the wrong to ſay that there was great Care taken as to the Meſſengers who viſited this Maid of ours? Methinks *Catherine* and *Margaret* were Perſons of ſome Diſtinction. A Circumſtance of this nature would furniſh a Monkiſh Writer with abundance of fine Reflections if the Life of our Saint was his Theme; he would doubtleſs obſerve the great Wiſdom in ſending She and not He-Saints to converſe with this holy Maid, ſince ſhe would certainly have been afraid to have ſtaid long alone with a Man, or even with the Appearance of a Man, eſpecially if the Saint had been of the Order of *Cordeliers* and wore the Habit: for you are to remark, that theſe celeſtial Viſitors came firſt to *Joan of Arc* at a time of Life when ſhe might have been very eaſily frighted; for in one of her Anſwers ſhe ſays, that at the Tree of the Fairies, and at a Fountain near to *Dompre*, ſhe had ſpoke with St. *Catharine* and St. *Margaret*, but not to the Fairies, and that her firſt Converſation with them was when ſhe was thirteen Years old.

Is it lawful, my Friend, for an Author who has otherwiſe a great deal of Merit, to attempt to prove the Inſpiration of the Maid of *Orleans*, by Stories ſo viſibly fabulous as theſe are? Whenever theſe Anſwers are mentioned to a Philoſopher who makes uſe of his Reaſon, he will not heſitate a Moment, let his Religion be what it will, in aſſerting that the whole was a Scheme of Policy. Ought we to be aſtoniſhed at the odd Things we meet with in *Greek* and *Roman* Writers, when we ſee *French* Hiſtorians in great Eſteem boldly tell ſo puerile a Fable as this, and ſo contrary to common Senſe? How ſhall a Chriſtian, who pretends to ſwallow this Tale, give his Reaſons

Reaſons for rejecting the Stories with which the Writings of an *Herodotus* are ſprinkled.

To be thoroughly convinced of the Abſurdity of this pious Fraud, we need only conſider a little the Conduct of this Woman while ſhe was in Priſon. *Being ſollicited by her Judges to put on again the Habit of a Woman, ſhe ſaid, ſhe deſired never to uſe any female Garment, except a Shift might be put upon her dead Body: And being afterwards told that ſhe ſhould be admitted to the Communion if ſhe would lay aſide Men's Clothes, ſhe took it into her head to prefer her Breeches to all Things, and to chuſe rather to live as an excommunicated Perſon than to put on a Petticoat.* At laſt however ſhe ſubmitted to go to Maſs in a Gown, but upon this expreſs Condition, that ſhe might again put on Men's Clothes when ſhe came from Chapel. Was not this a whimſical Fancy? *

What is ſtill more extraordinary, it was in complaiſance to the Orders of St. *Catherine* and St. *Margaret* that ſhe was ſo much attached to her Breeches; it is true ſhe ſuffered dearly for following their Advice. *The Proſecutor having finiſhed his Evidence,* ſays *Paſquier, Sentence was pronounced by the Biſhop. He ſaid, that all that had been done by this Woman was to be accounted Fiction and Deluſion, in order to ſeduce the poor People, or elſe the Invention of the Devil; and that in acting in this manner ſhe had blaſpheined againſt the Honour of God, acted undutifully towards her Parents, beſides ſhewing herſelf a very impious Perſon in declining the holy Communion rather than part with the Habit of the other Sex. There concurred in this Judgment the Biſhops of* Conſtance *and* Liſieux, *the Chapter of the Cathedral Church of* Roan, *Sixteen*

* *We are told this in* Latin, *every way worthy of the times wherein the Maid of* Orleans *ſuffered as a Witch.* Noluit huic præcepto obſequi: in quo apparet Pervicacia ejus, et Obduratio ad Malum, et contemptus Sacramentorum.

Doctors,

Doctors, Six Licentiates and Batchelors of Divinity, and eleven Advocates of Roan; *this Sentence was tranſmitted to the Univerſity of* Paris *in order to have their Opinion thereupon: The Univerſity declared that the Maid was truly a Heretick and a Schiſmatick, and directed two Letters, one to the King, the other to the Biſhop of* Beauvais, *deſiring ſhe might be put to death.*

Notwithſtanding the Deciſion of the Univerſity, the *Engliſh* were for ſaving her Life, provided always ſhe would conſent to quit thoſe curſed Breeches, of which ſhe had been hitherto ſo very fond. The holy Warriour finding at laſt that die ſhe muſt, or put on a Petticoat, ſhe wiſely reſolved to make choice of the latter, and this without waiting for the Advice of St. *Margaret*. *They expoſed her on a publick Scaffold,* ſays *Paſquier, where, after ſhe had been admoniſhed, ſhe declared aloud that ſhe ſubmitted to the Judgment of God and of our Holy Father the Pope. Then perceiving that they expected ſtill more from her, ſhe profeſſed her unfeigned Belief of all that the Church taught; and ſaid farther, that ſince many wiſe and diſcreet People were of Opinion that the Appearances ſhe had ſeen were not from God, ſhe was content to believe ſo, and to make a publick Abjuration, which is inſerted at full length in her Proceſs. Upon this followed another Sentence, whereby ſhe is abſolved from her Excommunication and condemned to perpetual Impriſonment. After this, ſhe reſumed the Habit of her Sex, and was accordingly conducted back to Priſon.*

See, my Friend, the Maid's Affairs now in a pretty tolerable Condition, and her Life ſecured at the Expence of her Breeches. But the miſchief was, that ſhe had put on her Coats without conſulting St. *Catharine*, who was extremely vext to find her in Woman's Garb; when ſhe came next to make her a viſit, ſhe reprimanded her ſeverely. Who, ſaid ſhe, put you upon changing your Garb?

reſume,

reſume, at all Events, that which I recommended, and let me ſee you do it this Minute. *Joan of Arc* obeyed, and very unluckily for her, as the Sequel of her Story, given us by *Paſquier*, will ſhew.

They had however left her Men's Clothes by her, in order to ſee what ſhe would do. No ſooner was ſhe alone, than, upon ſecond Thoughts, ſhe repented of her Abjuration, and put on again the Clothes ſhe had thrown aſide. This Abjuration, dear *Iſaac*, in my Opinion, reſembles ſtrongly that Recantation which *La Cadiere* made of the Crimes by her charg'd upon *Father Girard*; ſhe too, quickly reſum'd her former Sentiments. *Joan of Arc* did the ſame thing. The one was ſchool'd by the *Janſeniſts*, the other by St. *Catharine*; but *Joan* paid for it very dearly. Early the next Morning ſhe was viſited, and being found in her old Habit, was asked how ſhe came to make this Change; ſhe ſaid, ſhe did it at the Command of the *Saints*, and that ſhe was willing rather to obey God than Men. On theſe Words ſhe was declared a Heretick relapſed, and in conſequence thereof delivered over to the ſecular Arm and condemned to be burnt alive.——The Univerſity of *Paris* alſo, willing to play its part, ordered a Proceſſion on the Feaſt of St. *Martin*, whereat a Dominican Fryar made a ſolemn Declamation againſt this poor Wench, in order to ſhew that whatever ſhe had done was by the aſſiſtance of the Devil and not of God.

You ſee what a Noiſe and Diſturbance a Petticoat and a Pair of Breeches occaſioned, and what a ſtruggle there was which of the two this maſculine Maid ſhould wear. Surely this appears very ridiculous, and yet if we go to the Bottom of Things we muſt acknowledge that the Dreſs of this Wench was a Point of State, and a proper Subject of refined Politicks. Thoſe of the *French* Nation required that

Joan

Joan ſhould not quit her Breeches, and on the other hand, it was requiſite for the *Engliſh* that ſhe ſhou'd appear in Petticoats. The Reaſon you'll eaſily perceive to be very well founded. The aſtoniſhing Impreſſion which the Sanctity of *Joan of Arc* had made on the other Minds of the Soldiers of *Charles* VII. had totally ruined the *Engliſh* Affairs in *France*. In order therefore to reſtore them, and to deſtroy a Notion which was ſo advantagious to their Enemies, it became neceſſary for them to make the Maid diſavow all her pretended Revelations. The Moment ſhe laid aſide her Breeches their Point was gained. On the other hand, *Joan of Arc* knew perfectly well of how great Uſe her Impoſture was, and of what mighty Conſequence her intereſting the Saints in the Affair. This made her remain firm till the Fear of an approaching Death got the better of her Diſſimulation. But being terrified with the fear of Puniſhment, ſhe conſented at length to own the Falſhood of the Tale ſhe had told. When ſhe had once taken this ſtep, the *Engliſh* ought to have reſted there, as having effectually deſtroyed her Credit. But it ſeems they were not of this Opinion, they laid therefore a Snare for her utter Deſtruction, by leaving her Breeches in the way. They might as well have ſhut up an hungry Dog in a Chamber full of Proviſions, and charg'd him not to eat. The Maid being recovered from her firſt Fright, ſaw the Conſequence of the falſe ſtep ſhe had made, and had a mind to repair it. She flattered herſelf that the *Engliſh* durſt not put her to death; but ſhe miſtook their Tempers.

After all, dear *Iſaac*, tho' I deny the Holineſs of *Joan of Arc*, I am far from detracting from the juſt Praiſes ſhe deſerved. She was certainly a Heroine, and delivered her Country. The Cruelty of the *Engliſh* towards her, is a Stain upon them as a Nation.

Nation. They ought to have look'd upon their Priſoner with the Reſpect due to a Perſon faithful to her King and Country, and who ſerv'd them as far as her Wit and Courage would carry her. If the *Engliſh* had at preſent ſuch another Woman in their Hands, they would admire her Valour and venerate her Perſon, as much as they would contemn her Pretences to Saintſhip.

Adieu, dear *Iſaac*, live content and happy, and let me have the Satisfaction of hearing from you.

London.

LETTER CLIII.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a Rabbi at* Conſtantinople.

AS much as I am prejudiced in favour of Mr. *Locke*'s Sentiments, I can ſcarce grant him that the Soul ſometimes ceaſes totally to think, that is, while we are aſleep.

I do admit that I am not thoroughly ſatisfied that this Opinion is abſolutely falſe, but I look upon it as doubtful, and therefore I ſhould have been glad he laid down his Notion as probable only, and not as certain. This ſage Philoſopher ſeems to me too much perſuaded that the *Carteſians* are miſtaken in their Definition of the Eſſence of the Soul, when they aſſure us that it conſiſts in actual Thought. *We know*, ſays he, *certainly, by Experience, that ſometimes We think, and hence we deduce this infallible Concluſion, that we have in us ſomething which hath*

hath a Power of thinking: But to know whether this Subſtance thinks continually or not, is what we cannot be aſſured of, farther than Experience informs us. For to ſay that actual Thinking is an eſſential Property of the Soul, is viſibly to beg the Queſtion, without any kind of Proof. *

I am of Opinion, my Friend, that *Locke* had no juſt Reaſon for this Reproach on the *Carteſians*, becauſe there are ſeveral ſtrong Reaſons which ſeem to authorize this Definition, that the Eſſence of the Soul conſiſts in the actual Faculty of thinking. "The Soul, ſay the Philoſophers, hath neither "Magnitude, Extent, nor Depth. Thus then, "none of thoſe Attributes which belong to Matter "can be aſſigned thereto. We know then but one "of its Qualities, *viz.* that of thinking. Have "we not Reaſon then to alledge that it cannot ſub-"ſiſt without this, and that it is its Eſſence, becauſe "it is the only Quality which we have diſcovered. "For, as we are acquainted with the Exiſtence of "Matter, only by the means of its Extenſion, ſo "all the Knowledge we have of Souls is by "Thought. In as much as we heſitate not to de-"fine the Eſſence of Matter by Extenſion, on "account of our knowing no material Subſtance "but what is extended, why ſhould we not define "the Eſſence of the Soul by the actual Exerciſe of "Thought, ſince we cannot perceive a ſpiritual "Subſtance but what has this Faculty of thinking?"

Tho' it may be poſſible to anſwer theſe Objections, or at leaſt to ſhew that they are not convincing, it muſt however be acknowledged that they ought to be thoroughly examined, and that they very well deſerve our Attention: The *Carteſians* are far from

* *Locke*'s Eſſay on Human Underſtanding. Book II. Chap. i. §. 10. *All the Quotations are in this Chapter.*

aſſerting

aſſerting that the Soul always thinks, *without Proofs*. *Locke* therefore had no Right to reproach theſe Philoſophers for advancing, without Evidence and againſt Reaſon, a Queſtion with reſpect to Fact, and that there was nothing but might be proved, according to their Method. " I need only ſuppoſe, *ſaid* " *he*, that all Watches think while the Balance is " in motion, and I ſhall have thereby ſufficiently " prov'd that my Watch thought all laſt Night long." But the *Carteſians* might ſay, *You have no Right to ſay that your Watch thinks while the Balance moves, becauſe you have not only no probable Reaſon to aſſert that the Motion of a Balance hath any thing to do with Thought, but you are, on the other hand, fully aſſured that in as much as it is a material Subſtance, it has no other Qualities than thoſe of Extent, Quantity and Thickneſs. But with reſpect to us, the Caſe is very different. We ſay that the Soul thinks as well when we are aſleep as when we are awake, becauſe we were ſure that the Faculty of thinking belongs thereto, not only when the Body is awake, but aſleep, of which the Remembrance of our Dreams is a certain and evident Proof. We therefore have ſome foundation to conclude, that it may do continually what it does for ſome Moments; whereas your Suppoſition of the Balance and the Watch is abſurd and ridiculous.*

I will continue, dear *Iſaac*, my Examination of *Locke*'s Sentiments, and I beſeech you to give me your Opinion of the Difficulties which appear in them to me. " The firſt time we fall faſt aſleep, " ſays that Philoſopher, I apprehend we ſhall be " ſufficiently ſatisfied that there is nothing in their " Doctrine, who teach that the Soul always thinks. " At leaſt thoſe who have ſlept without dreaming " can never be convinced that their Thoughts were " in Action, during the ſpace of four Hours, while " they knew nothing of the matter; and if they

" are

" are taken in the very Act, waked in the middle " of that ſleeping Contemplation, can give no " manner of Account of it. It will perhaps be ſaid, " that the Soul thinks, even in the ſoundeſt Sleep, " but the Memory retains it not; That the Soul " in this ſleeping Man, ſhould be this Moment " buſy a thinking, and the next Moment in a " waking Man, not remember, or be able to re- " collect one Jot of all thoſe Thoughts, is very " hard to be conceived, and would need ſome bet- " ter Proof than bare Aſſertion to make it be- " lieved."

The *Carteſians* might reply to theſe Objections, that far from reſting their Notions on the Aſſurance they give us of their Juſtice and Truth, they rely on daily Experience for the Proof of their Opinions. For in fact, does it not ſeem an odd thing to be amazed that a Man, waking on a ſudden, ſhould loſe in an Inſtant, the Thoughts which occupied him while he ſlept; whereas we daily ſee Men in their full Senſes and broad awake, forgetting one Minute what they thought on a Minute before, and ſtriving, to no purpoſe, to recover their firſt Thought? There is not a Man in the World to whom theſe Slips do not ſometimes happen, and there is nothing more common than to hear a Man ſay, I had this Minute ſomething to tell you, it has eſcaped me, I have done all I can to recollect it, but I find it is abſolutely in vain. I would ask, my dear *Iſaac*, if the Soul, forgetting totally certain Thoughts which occupied it a Moment before, while the Body it occupies is wide awake, we ought to think it extraordinary that it loſes the Remembrance of thoſe Thoughts which employed it while the Body was aſleep, of which conſequently it could have but light Impreſſions, its Organs being, in a manner, ſtopt up and able to ſerve it but faintly. Shall we

we ſay that it is not impoſſible that the Soul may reſt for a Moment, that is, ceaſe from thinking, even when a Man is awake; and that his forgetting its Perceptions is owing to this ſhort and imperceptible Ceſſation of Thought? This would be an Abſurdity ſo great and ſo evident, that Experience alone would ſufficiently detect it. The ſage *Locke* was too quick-ſighted to adopt ſuch an Opinion. He ſays on the contrary, *that it is admitted the Soul never ceaſes to think while a Man is awake, becauſe this is preciſely what, in this reſpect, conſtitutes his Condition.* Who then can ſhew us a Reaſon for a Man's forgetting his own Thoughts while he is awake? Let us, I ſay, ſee him who will anſwer this Queſtion, and he will have a Right to oblige the *Carteſians* in their turn, to explain how a Man may think all Night without knowing, the next Morning, any thing of the Ideas which occupied his Mind for ſo many Hours.

The Difficulty which *Locke* propoſes, as to the Inutility of the Soul's thinking during the Time of Sleep, does not appear to me very conſiderable. "To think often, ſays he, and never to retain it, "ſo much as one Moment, is a very uſeleſs ſort of "thinking, and the Soul in ſuch a State of thinking "does very little, if at all, excel that of a Look-"ing-Glaſs, which conſtantly receives Variety of "Images or Ideas, but retains none; they diſap-"pear and vaniſh, and there appears no Footſteps "of them; the Looking-Glaſs is never the better "for ſuch Ideas, nor the Soul for ſuch Thoughts.— "If the Soul retains no Memory of its own Thoughts, "if it cannot lay them up for its Uſe, and be able to "recall them upon occaſion, if it cannot reflect "upon what is paſt and make uſe of its former "Experiences, Reaſonings and Contemplations, to "what Purpoſe does it think? They who make the

" the Soul a thinking Thing, at this rate will not
" make it a more noble Being than thoſe do whom
" they condemn for allowing it to be nothing but
" the ſubtileſt parts of Matter.——Nature never
" makes excellent Things for mean or no Uſes; and
" it is hardly to be conceived, that our infinitely wiſe
" Creator ſhould make ſo admirable a Faculty as
" the Power of Thinking, to be ſo idly employed,
" at leaſt a quarter Part of its time, as to think
" conſtantly without remembring any of its
" Parts."

This Paſſage, my dear *Iſaac*, contains two Objections. The firſt reſpects the Inutility of Thoughts to a Man aſleep. But to this the *Carteſians* may well reply to *Locke*, that thoſe Thoughts which he looks upon as ſuperfluous may be very neceſſary, tho' we are not acquainted with their Uſe: Becauſe 'tis too haſty a Concluſion that in conſequence of our not knowing what Uſe a Thing is for, therefore it ought not to be. The Weakneſs of human Underſtanding hinders it from penetrating the Uſe of a multitude of Beings, which exiſt notwithſtanding, nor have we any Right to deny their Exiſtence. Beſides, Experience inclines us to believe that Men really reap Profit from the Thoughts which their Souls have in Sleep, tho' they are not communicated to the Body. The Tranſlator of *Locke* remarks very juſtly, that the Inutility of theſe Kind of Thoughts is not ſo certain as our Author imagines. *A Child*, ſays he, *is obliged to get by heart a dozen or fifteen Verſes out of* Virgil; *He reads him three or four Times juſt before his going to ſleep, and repeats them as ſoon as he awakes in the Morning, perfectly well. Does his Soul think of theſe Verſes while he is buried in a profound Sleep? The Child knows nothing of the matter. However, if the Soul actually ruminated on the Verſes, as I think I may ſuſpect, with ſome Appearance*

Appearance of Reaſon, then here are certain Thoughts not altogether uſeleſs for Man, tho' he has no ſort of Remembrance that his Soul was employed about them ſo much as one Moment. *

The ſecond Objection of *Locke* falls of itſelf. For when we have deſtroyed the firſt, and have proved that the Thoughts of a Man aſleep may be uſeful to him tho' he cannot remember that he thought, it can no longer be ſaid that Nature does nothing in vain, and that God, acting always with infinite Wiſdom, beſtows not ſuperfluous Faculties on any Being. In order to have made his Reaſons clear and concluſive, it ought to have been evidently and unanſwerably proved that the Thoughts of a Man aſleep are abſolutely uſeleſs, and even after that there would remain a Difficulty to be reſolved. *Of what Uſe*, might one ſay to Mr. *Locke*, *are Dreams? Are they very uſeful or neceſſary to Men, or do they draw any great Advantage from the dark Remembrance of certain whimſical Ideas preſented to their Imaginations? Here are Thoughts that are little better than uſeleſs, and yet occupy the human Soul while the Body is aſleep. God therefore may have afforded Man a Faculty of forming other Thoughts, of which he entirely loſes all Remembrance.*

Fare thee well, dear *Iſaac*, live content and happy.

London.

* *Remarque a la Page* 73. *de la* 2*d Edition.* i. e. of *P. Coſte*'s Tranſlation of *Locke*'s Eſſay on Human Underſtanding.

LET-

LETTER CLIV.

ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople, *to* AARON MONCECA.

I Have examined, with all imaginable Attention, the Letter you wrote me concerning the Difficulties you find in that Opinion, which will not admit actual Thinking to be the Eſſence of the Soul. After comparing your Objections with what *Locke* hath written on the Subject, I am thoroughly perſuaded that it was on a good Foundation this ſage Philoſopher maintained that there is an Appearance of the Soul's reſting, during conſiderable Intervals, without thinking.

The Compariſon you make between *Extenſion* as the Effence of Matter, and the *actual Exerciſe of Thought*, as the Eſſence of the Soul, doth not appear to me either juſt or concluſive. I could farther deny that Extenſion is the Eſſence of Matter, and could alledge that you are ſo far from knowing what conſtitutes a Spiritual Subſtance, that you are ignorant even of the firſt Principles of material Things. *Deſcartes*, ſays a modern Philoſopher, * *makes the Eſſence of a Body conſiſt in Extenſion, and concludes that there is Extenſion wherever there is Matter.*—

* Philoſophie du Bon Sens, ou Reflexions Philoſophiques a l'Uſage des Cavaliers et du Beau Sexe. *pag.* 278. That is, *The Philoſophy of Good Senſe, or Philoſophical Reflections for the Uſe of Gentlemen and Ladies. By the Marquiſs* D'Argens, *the Author of this Book.*

I ask then what Reaſon there is that Extenſion ſhould conſtitute the Nature and Eſſence of a Body rather than Solidity, or any other eſſential Quality of Matter. For by this Attention to a ſingle Attribute abſtracted from all the reſt, we are given to underſtand that the other Qualities may ſubſiſt without it, which is contrary however to their Nature. I may ſingle out any particular Attribute, ſtop there, and ſuppoſe it to conſtitute the Eſſence of Body. If I hold in my Hand a Sphere, I may, by Abſtraction, ſuppoſe that all its Weight is in its Centre, and attend only to this Idea of its Centre. It would however be abſurd for me to conclude that the Nature and Eſſence of Body conſiſts in Gravity only. Beſides, We do not know all that is in this Body, at leaſt, we cannot demonſtrate theſe Notions of ours. Therefore we do not certainly know how it is conſtituted; and tho' we perceive not above ſeven or eight Attributes, yet can we not aſſure ourſelves that it hath none others, without which its Exiſtence would be as impoſſible as without thoſe ſeven or eight which are known to us. If the Nature of a Thing conſiſts of thirty Attributes neceſſary and inſeparable, and ten of theſe ſhould be taken away, it would be ridiculous in us to ſuppoſe we ſtill had that thing which abſolutely required thirty. On the contrary, we have another Thing which abſolutely requires a leſſer number of Attributes to form its Exiſtence. It is the ſame thing with reſpect to Body; of which, as we cannot demonſtrate that we know all its Attributes, it is alſo impoſſible that we ſhould preciſely know what conſtitutes its Eſſence.

You ſee then, *Monceca*, that there are very ſtrong Reaſons againſt the pretended Certainty of the *Carteſians*, with reſpect to the Eſſence of Matter. Now if it be true that Men are uncertain as to the Nature of Bodies, why ſhould they flatter themſelves that they have clear and diſtinct Notions of the Nature of the Soul? Might not *Locke* very well ſay

to the *Carteſians*, *Before you perſuade yourſelves that you ought to define the Eſſence of Matter by Extenſion, and that of the Soul by actual Thought, becauſe you cannot imagine any corporeal thing without Extenſion, or any ſpiritual Being without the Faculty of Thinking; ſtay till you are clearly informed as to all the different Attributes which are abſolutely neceſſary to theſe different Subſtances, that you may not allow a ſingle Attribute to be the Eſſence of a thing, which it may be requires thirty, of which you are ignorant, and yet nevertheleſs, they are abſolutely neceſſary as to its Exiſtence. You believe, or at leaſt you would perſuade others that you believe that you are certain, in the Notions you have of the Eſſence of ſpiritual and material Beings; yet one may very reaſonably ſay that you are ſo far from knowing the Nature of theſe Subſtances, that you are abſolutely ignorant wherein conſiſts the Difference between them.*

I don't know, my Friend, whether ever you have taken notice of what *Locke* wiſely objects to the *Carteſians*, on the Subject of Man's Ignorance as to the Eſſence of the human Soul. "We have, "ſays he, the Ideas of Matter and Thinking, but "poſſibly ſhall never be able to know whether any "meer material Being thinks or no, it being im- "poſſible for us, by the Contemplation of our own "Ideas, without Revelation, to diſcover whether "Omnipotency has not given to ſome Syſtems of "Matter fitly diſpoſed, a Power to perceive and "think; or elſe joined and fixed to Matter ſo diſ- "poſed a thinking immaterial Subſtance; it being "in reſpect of our Notions, not much more re- "mote from our Comprehenſion to conceive that "God can, if he pleaſes, ſuperadd to Matter a "Faculty of thinking, than that he ſhould ſuper- "add to it another Subſtance with a Faculty of "thinking——For ſince we muſt allow God has annexed

" annexed Effects to Motion, which we can no " way conceive Motion able to produce, what " Reaſon have we to conclude that he could not " order them, as well to be produced in a Subject " we cannot conceive capable of them, as well as " in a Subject we cannot conceive the Motion of " Matter can any way operate upon ?"

Before it is defined that the Soul always thinks, and that it is contrary to its Eſſence to remain ſometimes altogether unactive while the Body ſleeps, the *Carteſians* ought to ſhew us, not only full Anſwers to *Locke*'s Objections, but alſo that we are under no kind of Uncertainty as to the Nature of the Soul. If they cannot demonſtratively prove that it is not material, which they cannot do, becauſe they are ignorant of its Nature, what do they mean by defining its Eſſence, and founding all their Reaſonings upon that raſh Definition? Dr. *Stillingfleet* would have perſuaded *Locke*, that the Neceſſity of the Soul's being ſpiritual might be demonſtrated, and that the giving to a Matter a Power of thinking was impoſſible, even to God. To the old Reaſons of the *Carteſians*, he added ſome new ones. You may find a clear detail of this whole Diſpute in the Notes to the Eſſay on Human Underſtanding. The *Engliſh* Philoſopher ſays to his Adverſary, " Our Idea of Matter in general being a ſolid Sub- " ſtance, and our Idea of Body a ſolid, extended, " figured Subſtance; you pretend, if I admit Mat- " ter to be capable of thinking, I confound the " Idea of Matter with the Idea of a Spirit; to " which I anſwer, No, no more than I confound " the Idea of Matter with the Idea of a Horſe, " when I ſay, that Matter in general is a ſolid " extended Subſtance, and that a Horſe is a mate- " rial Animal, or an extended ſolid Subſtance " with Senſe and ſpontaneous Motion. The Idea

" of Matter is an extended ſolid Subſtance; where-
" ever there is ſuch a Subſtance there is Matter,
" and the Eſſence of Matter, whatever other Qua-
" lities, not contained in that Subſtance, it ſhall
" pleaſe God to ſuperadd to it. For Example,
" God creates an extended ſolid Subſtance, with-
" out the ſuperadding any thing elſe to it; and ſo
" we may conſider it at reſt: to ſome Parts of it
" he ſuperadds Motion, but it has ſtill the Eſſence
" of Matter; other Parts of it, he frames into
" Plants, with all the Excellencies of Vegetation,
" Life, and Beauty which is to be found in a
" Roſe, or a Peach-Tree, above the Eſſence of
" Matter in general; but it is ſtill Matter: to other
" Parts, he adds Senſe and ſpontaneous Motion,
" and thoſe other Properties that are to be found
" in an Elephant. All this is allow'd; but if one
" ventures to go a ſtep farther, and ſay, God may
" give to Matter Thought, Reaſon, and the Power
" of Willing, as well as Senſe and ſpontaneous
" Motion, there are Men ready preſently to limit
" the Power of the omnipotent Creator *." To theſe Objections, dear *Monceca*, Dr. *Stillingfleet* could oppoſe nothing that was reaſonable. He had recourſe to general Terms, which had been over and over examined, and invincibly refuted. Let us acknowledge then frankly, that we know nothing of the Soul. We know that in Men awake it always thinks, but whether it hath any Perceptions while we are aſleep, is a thing we never can be clear in.

As to what you ſay of the ſudden Loſs of Thought which Men daily perceive when they are awake, it can, by no means, be compared with thoſe into which the Soul falls, in caſe it were certain it

* *Locke*'s Eſſay on Human Underſtanding, *Book* iv. *chap.* iii.

thought

thought while we ſlept. For a Man awake, who forgets ſomething which was in his head a Moment before, remembers he thought, though he cannot recollect of what, becauſe his Mind is diſtracted by other Ideas; he retains, however, a certain Conviction and perfect Remembrance that he had ſome Perceptions, whereas a Man who has ſlept all Night, wakes the next Morning without knowing that his Mind perceived any Idea whatſoever. One ought to regard ſuch ſlips in a Man, who is awake, as the conſequence of a continual Circulation of Ideas. It is not reaſonable therefore, to explain after this manner, that Ignorance in which the Soul appears to be on the waking of the Body, as to all the fine Thoughts with which he is ſuppoſed to have been occupied. Had not then *Locke* reaſon to ſay, *Wake a Man out of a deep Sleep, and ask him what he was thinking of. If he knew not that he had been thinking, he muſt be a very extraordinary Perſon to aſſert that he never ceaſed to think. Might not one with more reaſon affirm that he had not ſlept? This is beyond all doubt, a Matter out of the reach of Philoſophy; and there is nothing but an expreſs Revelation could diſcover to another that certain Thoughts paſſed in my Soul, though I did not diſcover them my ſelf. Theſe People muſt certainly have very piercing Eyes to diſcern certainly that I think, while I my ſelf cannot perceive it, and expreſsly declare as much. What is ſtill more remarkable, theſe ſame Eyes, which ſee more in me than I ſee in my ſelf, can alſo perceive that Dogs and Elephants do not think, though theſe Animals give us all imaginable Demonſtrations of their thinking except telling us as much.*

As to Dreams, dear *Monceca*, which you fancy favour your Sentiment, take care that it does not overturn it, for it ſeems that they are evident Proofs that when the Soul does think in our Sleep we are ſenſible of

it; and that it cannot think at all, but the whole human Machine muſt be ſenſible thereof. I agree with you as to the Inutility of Dreams, but then they are occaſion'd by ſecond Cauſes: They are occaſion'd by certain Motions in the Brain during our Sleep. Their Inutility therefore cannot excuſe that of the pretended Power of Thinking in the Soul, which it muſt derive immediately from God, ſince it cannot be produced by any Paſſions of the Body, otherwiſe it would have knowledge of them, as this Senſibility in Dreams clearly proves. *Locke* then had reaſon to ſay that Nature makes nothing in vain, and that it is by no means likely that the Soul ſhould have a faculty of employing itſelf about uſeleſs Thoughts while the Body is aſleep. Read over again with attention, dear *Monceca*, all that *Locke* has ſaid in ſupport of his Sentiment, and I am perſuaded you will never more accuſe him of being too deciſive.

Adieu my Friend, live content and happy.

Cairo.

LETTER CLV.

AARON MONCECA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, heretofore a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

THE *Engliſh*, dear *Iſaac*, are very nice Obſervers of their Laws, they follow the Text ſtrictly without ſeeking Explications which may elude them, or under pretence of entring into the Idea

Idea of the Legiſlator, converting the Study of their Laws into an arbitrary Science. The Courts, wherein Juſtice is diſtributed, are never in the leaſt doubt, whether ſuch a Crime is to be puniſhed in ſuch a manner. It is the Care of the Judges only to diſcover whether the Party accuſed be really guilty. This once decided, the Law ſpeaks the Penalty of its Tranſgreſſion. In *England* the Judge only reports the Proceſs; the Law itſelf is, properly ſpeaking, the Judge.

One cannot, my Friend, ſufficiently approve a Practice ſo prudent and ſo judicious. Whatever Probity Men may be endow'd with, who are placed in the Seats of Juſtice, it is expedient to limit their Deciſions, and not to leave it in their Breaſts to puniſh or to leave unpuniſhed, as they think fit, thoſe who come before them. The Heart of Man is the Seat of ſo many Paſſions, and his Underſtanding is ſo often the Dupe of his Prejudices, that it is next to an impoſſibility he ſhould not err whenever he acts without reſtraint. If Judges did not need direction, written Laws had never been compiled; but all things had been left to the Underſtandings of the Judges. But it was juſtly apprehended, that Judges might act like Men, even in diſcharge of their Offices, and ſee things through ſuch Miſts of Paſſion as might change their Form and Figure, or diſguiſe them at leaſt.

I am very ſenſible, my Friend, that a rigid Obſervance of Laws may ſometimes create miſchiefs: for which there can be no Remedies. I know too, that there are Caſes wherein it might be juſtly wiſh'd that we might interpret the Will of the Legiſlator, ſo as to give it a more or leſs extended Senſe. But I know too, that if ſuch a Liberty as this might be in ſome caſes uſeful to private Perſons, it would not however fail to become dangerous,

and even fatal to the Publick. It would accuſtom the Judges to arbitrary Deciſions, and open a gate to a thouſand Inconveniences, which would not fail to enter. But when a general Rule is eſtabliſh'd, we ſeek not the Good of two or three Perſons, but of the far greater Part of the Society *. *Seneca*, ſpeaking of the *Roman* Laws about inſolvent Debtors, which made no diſtinction between ſuch as grew inſolvent through inevitable Accidents, and thoſe, who by Gaming and Debauchery, drew their Puniſhments juſtly upon them; obſerves roundly, that it is better a few ſhould run the riſque of loſing the benefit of a juſt Excuſe, rather than room be left for all the world to avoid paying, or ſuffering for nonpayment by ſetting up ſpecious Pretences †.

It is ſufficient, dear *Iſaac*, to compel our Approbation of this wiſe Cuſtom, to ſubmit entirely and without reſerve to the Laws, that Reaſon and Experience ſhew this Cuſtom is more beneficial to the Publick than that which leaves an arbitrary Authority to the Judges. For as nobody pretends to doubt, that Men in general need ſome ſupport to prevent their giving way to their Paſſions, ſo, as Judges are not Angels, they want Supports as well as other Men: and this they may find by a ſteady

* *Nulla Lex ſatis commoda omnibus eſt: id modo quæritur ſi majori Parti & in ſummam prodeſt.* Tit. Livius, lib. xxxiv. cap. 3. num. 1.

† *Quid tu tam imprudentes judicas Majores noſtros fuiſſe, ut non intelligerent, iniquiſſimum eſſe eidem loco haberi eum qui Pecuniam, quam à Creditore acceperat, Libidine aut Aleâ abſumpſit, & eum qui Incendio, aut Latrocinio, aut aliquo Caſu triſtiore, aliena cum ſuis perdidit? Nullam Excuſationem receperunt, ut Homines ſcirent Fidem utique præſtandam. Satius enim erat à paucis etiam juſtam Excuſationem non accipi, quam ab omnibus aliquam tentari.* Seneca de Beneficiis, Lib. vii. cap. xvi.

adherence

adherence to the Laws, which will alike prevent their Hearts from being ſeduced, or their Underſtandings impoſed on.

From this neceſſity of yielding a preciſe Obedience to the Will of the Legiſlators, there flows a need of having no Laws in force, but what are ſtrictly equitable and juſt. Whenever, through a change of Times and Circumſtances, Laws, which were once wiſe and ſalutary, become of another Nature, there is a neceſſity of reſcinding and making them void. There cannot be a more dangerous Error for a State, or one more capable of diſturbing the publick Tranquillity, than the Reſpect which ſome Nations affect to pay to certain whimſical and ridiculous Laws, and the Memories of thoſe who made them. One would imagine, that they were not Men but Deities who inſtituted theſe perpetuated Cuſtoms; and that being reveal'd to them, who yield to them, as the Contents of our ſacred Scriptures were to us, they ſtood in awe of their Indignation who gave them, in caſe they broke through them. Unhappy Conſequences of Prejudices embraced in our Infancy, whereby a whole Society is ſacrificed to an Impertinence inſerted in the written Law, or ingrafted into a Body of old Cuſtoms!

We ſhould have much leſs reſpect for Legiſlators if we reflected that there is ſcarce one of them, even amongſt the moſt knowing or illuſtrious, who has not introduced ſomething extravagant or ridiculous, or contrary to the Rules of ſtrict Morality and Humanity at leaſt. *Lycurgus* ordain'd, by the Laws he gave to *Sparta*, that young Women ſhould wreſtle ſtark-naked before Men, and that they ſhould dance before them in the ſame manner, and ſing certain Songs. This Legiſlator, in the Inſtitution of this extravagant Cuſtom, had in view, the

giving ſtrength to the young Women's Bodies that they might bring forth ſtrong healthy Children, and feel leſs Inconveniency in Child-bearing. Such a method of rendring Women robuſt was not to be practiſed, without bidding adieu to all Senſe of Shame or Decency? or muſt not a Man have baniſh'd from his Thoughts all the Rules of good Manners and of natural Modeſty, before he could think of introducing a Cuſtom ſo inevitably deſtructive of them? The Pagans themſelves in the midſt of the Impieties and Darkneſs of their Religion, could not avoid diſcovering how contrary this infamous Law was to good Manners. In the *Andromache* of *Euripides*, *Peleus* attributes the Looſeneſs of *Helena* entirely to her being educated at *Sparta*. *It is not in the power of* Spartan *Ladies*, ſays he, *to be modeſt if they would; they come out of their Parents Houſes with Petticoats through which their Limbs are viſible. They run and wreſtle with the young Men; which I cannot ſuffer. After this, are you aſtoniſh'd that theſe Women are debauch'd one and all* *? This Paſſage from a *Greek*

* ——Οὐς ἄν, εἰ βούλοιτο τις,
Εὐφρων γένοιτο Σπαρτιατίδων χορῃ,
Αἳ ξὺν νέοισιν ἐξερημῶσαι δόμους,
Γυμνοῖσι μηροῖς, καὶ πέπλοις ἀνειμένοις,
Δόμους τε λαιτρας τ' οὐκ ἀνασχετὰς ἐμοὶ,
Κοινὰς ἔχουσι κατὰ θαυμάζειν χρεὼν,
Εἰ μὴ γυναῖκως σωφρονας παιδευετε.

——*Neque, ſi velit aliqua*
Puella Spartana, poſſit eſſe caſta:
Quæ, relinquentes Domos, cum Juvenibus,
Nudis Femoribus, & Tunicis laxatis,
Curſus, & Paleſtras, non tolerandas mihi,
Communes habent. Deinde an mirari oportet,
Si non educatis Mulieres caſtas?

Euripides, Androm. Ver. 598. p. 519.

Poet,

Poet, which ſo juſtly condemns that Debauchery which *Lycurgus* had eſtabliſh'd on ſuch falſe and ridiculous Pretences, is an evident Proof that Probity and Modeſty have found Advocates, even amongſt Nations whoſe eſtabliſh'd Religions were impious, and but too favourable to the Motions of the Paſſions. *Virtue*, ſays a *Nazarene* Father, *was reſpected, even where Debauchery bore the ſway**. May we not with Reaſon ſtand amazed, that ſuch as took upon them the care of Mankind, and the preſcribing to them Laws, ſhould nevertheleſs be more deficient, in reſpect to a Senſe of Shame and Good-manners, than private Men?

The Errors of ancient Lawgivers ought to ſerve as Cautions to ſuch as have, in theſe Days, the power of altering or reſcinding Laws. They ſhould be hindred, by conſidering of them, from having any Prejudices in favour of ſuch as have been enacted by their Anceſtors, ſo as to doubt of the Expediency of repealing them, whenever they are found either uſeleſs or dangerous. Is it not ridiculous to have more reſpect, either for a Man or for a Cuſtom, becauſe the Man has been dead or the Cuſtom eſtabliſhed five hundred Years, than if the Perſon was now living, or the Cuſtom juſt inſtituted? If we were once agreed on this Principle, it would be eaſy to ſhew that ſuch as are charged with the Care of ſuperintending the Laws of ſeveral Nations, would find enough to point out ſuch as ought to be abrogated, and to diſtinguiſh the Good from the Bad.

* *Tanta Vis eſt Probitatis & Caſtitatis, ut omnis, vel penè omnis, ejus Laude moveatur Humana Natura; nec uſque adeo ſit Turpitudine vicioſa, ut totum amittat Senſum Honeſtatis.* Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. ii. cap. xxvi. p. 255.

Lycurgus had eſtabliſh'd in *Sparta* a Senate compoſed of twenty-eight Perſons, who ballanced and kept within bounds the Power of their Monarchs. *Ariſtotle* cenſures the Conſtruction of this Senate, becauſe the Members were for Life. *The Mind*, ſays he, *grows old as well as the Body; it is unjuſt to commit the Lives and Fortunes of our Countrymen to ſuch as may become incapable of preſerving them.*

Plato could by no means approve what *Lycurgus* had ordain'd, as to throwing into a certain Pool at the Foot of Mount *Tagetes* ſuch Children as were born ill-ſhaped, tender, or with any kind of Defect.

Ariſtotle, on the contrary, praiſes this unnatural Cruelty, which ought rather to be exerciſed by wild Beaſts than by Men. As to Children, who ſhould be bred up or expoſed, that Philoſopher ſays, the Law ought to provide againſt the bringing up ſuch as are imperfect, or any ways maim'd in their Limbs: and that in ſuch Places as the Laws of the Country would not permit of this, another Expedient, which he mentions, ſhould be practiſed.

After reading a Propoſition ſo abſurd, ſo cruel, and ſo apparently repugnant to Humanity, ought we blindly to adopt Laws made by Men, who are held ever ſo much ſuperiour to the reſt of their Species, on account of the ſtrength of their Underſtandings? Happy, my Friend, is the Nation where the Laws are inviolably adhered to; and where, at the ſame time, none are received but what are founded in Virtue, Prudence, and Probity! That which, in too many Countries, gives the Judges room to raiſe themſelves above the Laws, to attribute to themſelves a kind of deſpotic Authority, and in criminal Matters eſpecially, to erect a kind of arbitrary Juriſdiction, is the viſible Flaws in the written Laws of thoſe Nations. As they have it

not

not in their powers either to alter or abrogate thoſe Laws, they take this Method of explaining them to their fancy; and this, after a hundred different Methods, according as they apprehend a variety of Caſes may require. In all theſe different Explications, they very often miſtake the Motions of their Paſſions for Impreſſions of Juſtice; and if at any time, they ſave thereby ſome innocent Perſons, it is probable, they free as many who are guilty.

I return, dear *Iſaac*, to the manner in which the *Engliſh* adminiſter Juſtice. It is wiſe, prudent, and worthy the Imitation of all other Nations. Whenever they perceive a Law to be wanting, they enact it; and take care to execute it ſtrictly, till they ſee cauſe to abrogate it. If, in proceſs of time, they perceive it to be hurtful, they do not endeavour to elude it by Explications, but repeal it. From an Apprehenſion of introducing this pernicious Cuſtom, of leaving Judges at liberty to follow their Caprices in matters of Life, or even of the Properties of their Fellow-Citizens, inſtead of granting an unlimited Authority to Magiſtrates, the *Engliſh* allow their Kings to be only Protectors of the Laws, and not Tyrants.

Adieu, dear *Iſaac*, live content and happy, and may the God of our Fathers cover thee with Bleſſings.

London.

LET-

LETTER CLVI.

AARON MONCECA *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople.

THE ſtrange Humours, dear *Iſaac*, which I have obſerv'd in the Nations through which I have rambled; thoſe Errors and Prejudices which, generally ſpeaking, blind Mankind, have obliged me to reflect ſeriouſly on the bad State of Morality among the *Europeans*. They are thoroughly perſuaded that the Maxims they follow are more conformable to Reaſon, and the Nature of Things, than are thoſe of the *Africans* and *Aſiaticks*. However, when we nicely examine their Sentiments, eſpecially ſuch as are founded on the Authority of their Divines, we eaſily diſcover that they are as wide of Juſtice and Equity as thoſe of the *Cannibals*, or any other Savages.

We need not be aſtoniſh'd that People do not perceive Errors in which they are grown up, and of which they grow every day more and more perſuaded. They cover them with a Veil of Religion and Piety; and thus they render them venerable. They believe that they ſerve God in digreſſing from the Rules of Morality. How then ſhould we wonder at ſuch Digreſſions?

The firſt *Nazarene* Doctors, whom they commonly call the Apoſtles, preach'd a Doctrine ſo conformable to Equity, and of ſuch high Uſe to Society,

Society, that their greateſt Adverſaries acknowledge their moral Precepts to be infinitely ſuperiour to thoſe of the wiſeſt Philoſophers among the Ancients. Our Rabbi's themſelves readily admit, that if the *Nazarenes* follow'd exactly the fundamental Principles of their Syſtem of Morals, they would be oblig'd to eſteem them as Men every way more worthy of Praiſe than *Socrates* himſelf. But unfortunately for them, and ſtill more ſo for us, they have entirely abandon'd the Sentiments of their firſt Doctors; and their Morality at this Day, is a kind of political Patchwork, wherein they have endeavour'd to preſerve ſome outward Reſemblance of their true and ancient Syſtem.

It ſeems to me, dear *Iſaac*, that Men are born to be the Dupes of all ſuch as pretend to inſtruct them for their own good, and yet really intend to ſerve their private Intereſts thereby: Two hundred Years after theſe firſt *Nazarene* Doctors had open'd the Eyes of their Diſciples, and taught them the Rules of exact Equity, a Set of Divines ſprung up, who made it their Buſineſs to deſtroy what the others had built up *. Among theſe there was one *Origen*, a Man of a dark and gloomy Temper, who was for puſhing things to Extremity. His Humour carried him ſo far, as to make him the firſt Victim of the Whimſicalneſs of his own Ideas. For in a ſtrong Fit of Enthuſiaſm, he caſtrated himſelf, that he might be able to inſtruct Women in the Principles of Religion, without running any riſque of yielding to Temptations.

Tertullian departed ſtill farther from the Rules of true Morality. He publiſh'd and maintain'd Opinions which abſolutely overturn'd all Rule and

* See the *ſecond* Part of *The Secret Memoirs of the Republick of Letters*, in which our Author treats amply of the *Fathers* of the *Church*.

Order

Order in States: He pretended that a *Nazarene* could not in Conſcience execute the Office of a Judge, damning all Magiſtrates without Reſtriction, and inſinuating, that to be an Emperor, and remain a Chriſtian, was impracticable.

Theſe firſt Errors, ſo contrary to ſound Morality, were quickly increaſed by new ones, invented and publiſhed by other Doctors; each Age produced an Author, who ſapped ſome eſſential Point of that equitable Syſtem which the firſt *Nazarene* Doctors had eſtabliſhed: For tho' theſe Writers were Men of Genius, Learning and Merit, they nevertheleſs gave way to the impetuous Motions of their reſpective Tempers, and became the firſt Dupes of their own Paſſions. In the time when the *Arians* had the Emperors on their ſide, *Gregory Nazianzen* declaimed againſt all Perſecutions; he preached warmly for Toleration, and maintain'd, that only gentle Methods were to be made uſe of to perſuade the Minds of Men. But when on the death of an Emperor, his Succeſſor proved no Favourer of *Arianiſm*, the ſame *Gregory* wrote a Letter to *Nectarius*, exhorting him to repreſent to the Emperor, that Piety and Religion demanded he ſhould not permit the Hereticks to aſſemble, or ſhew any kind of regard to the Privileges which had been granted them. So far was this *Nazarene* Doctor from preaching a Morality as pure as that of the firſt Founders of this Religion, that his Doctrines fell infinitely below thoſe of the Pagan Philoſophers, who all acknowledged, that that Fidelity, which conſiſts in Sincerity, and in maintaining one's Word, is the Foundation of all Juſtice *.

* *Fundamentum eſt autem Juſtitiæ Fides; id eſt Dictorum Conventorumque Conſtantia & Veritas.* Cicero de Officiis, *Libr. I. Cap. VII.*

This

This *Gregory* was not the only one amongſt thoſe which the *Nazarenes* called the *Fathers*, who ſupported Errors directly contrary to right Reaſon, and dangerous to publick Tranquillity. *Auſtin*, a Man truly illuſtrious, and of a ſublime and quick Wit, but vain, haſty, and of an extravagant Temper, wrote at firſt with moderation and prudence againſt the *Donatiſts*, who were his Adverſaries; but at laſt, the Warmth of his Genius carried him away. From that moment the Philoſopher vaniſhed, and the controverſial Divine appeared in his true light: He then began to maintain, loudly and openly, that it was neceſſary to perſecute, deſtroy, and exterminate ſuch as are called *Hereticks*; and for this Doctrine, he juſtly deſerves the Title of the *Patriarch of Perſecutors*. He even dared to advance, that we are not bound to keep faith with Hereticks, becauſe all things belong to the Faithful by divine Right; and there is nothing unto which Hereticks can have any legal Title. In this manner, this red-hot *African* eſtabliſhed it as a thing certain, that Contracts made by *Nazarenes* with Men of other Religions, were to continue in force till ſuch time only as they had the power of violating them. How much more pure is the Morality of *Cicero*? *Fraud*, ſays the *Roman* Philoſopher, *aggravates, inſtead of excuſing Perjury* *.

It was not only in their religious Diſputes, that the Fathers, or *Nazarene* Divines, ſubverted moral Principles. They ſometimes abuſed certain Paſſages taken from our ſacred Scriptures, in order to authorize their own erroneous Opinions. *Ambroſe*, in explaining the Pſalm, wherein *David* ſays that he had

* *Fraus enim adſtringit, non diſſolvit, Perjurium*, Cicero de Officiis, *Libr. III. Cap. XXXII.*

offended

offended againſt God alone *, takes occaſion from thence to ſet up a Principle the moſt abſurd, and the moſt contrary to Humanity. He ſays expreſly, that *David did not ſin againſt* Uriah, *when he cauſed him to be put in the Fore-front of the Battle, that he might fall; becauſe Kings, being Maſters of the Lives and Goods of their Subjects, may take them away when they think fit, without being guilty of any wrong, in reſpect to Men, on account of theſe Acts of Cruelty and Caprice* †. Make this Principle agree, if you can, with the fierce and imperious Behaviour of this very Doctor towards the Emperor *Theodoſius*, which the *Nazarenes* have however extolled beyond meaſure, or with thoſe outrageous Injuries, with which, without difficulty, he loaded *Magnentius*. This was far enough from correſponding with that exceſſive power, which, in the before-cited Paſſage, he ſo liberally beſtows on Kings. Can there be any thing more frightful, extravagant, or worthy of Puniſhment, than to aſſert, that a Prince, who takes away the Wife of one of his Subjects, and cauſes afterwards the innocent Husband to be put to death, ſins only againſt God, and does no real Injuſtice towards him who is the Martyr of his Cruelty? To be ſenſible of the pernicious Conſequences of an Opinion like this, one needs only reflect on the frightful Diſorders which it muſt neceſſarily draw after it. *There is*, ſays the ſage *La Bruyere* ‖, *a certain*

* *Tibi ſoli peccavi, & malum coram te feci*; &c. Pſalm. L. *verſ.* 6.

† *Rex utique erat, nullis Legibus tenebatur, quia liberi ſunt Reges à Vinculis Delictorum. Neque enim ullis ad Pœnam vocantur Legibus, tuti Imperii Poteſtate. Homini ergo non peccavit, cui non tenebatur obnoxius. Sed quamvis tutus Imperio, Devotione tamen ac Fide erat Deo ſubditus.* Ambroſii Apologia Davidis, *Cap. X.*

‖ Caracteres ou Mœurs du Siecle, *Tom. I. pag.* 479. *Com-*

Commerce, or Exchange of Duties between Sovereigns and Subjects; which are the moſt difficult to perform, I determine not: This would be to judge, on the one ſide, of the ſtrict Obligations to Reſpect, Duty, Fidelity, Obedience, and Dependance; and on the other, the as indiſpenſible Obligation of doing Juſtice, and acting beneficently, which belong to the Prince. To add to this, that he is abſolute Maſter of the Goods of his Subjects, without regard, without account; I ſay, to add this, is running into the Notions of a Favourite, who would add any thing.

Behold, my Friend, a Morality quite different from that of *Ambroſe*, which is ſo much the more ſurpriſing, becauſe this ſlaviſh Submiſſion was never inſiſted upon among the Pagans, the moſt devoted to deſpotick Government. So far were they from believing, that Kings were at liberty to poſſeſs themſelves of the Goods of their Subjects unjuſtly, and to take away their Lives at their Will, that *Herodotus* * informs us, the *Perſians*, who were ſo ſubmiſſive to their Princes, had amongſt them a Law, by which their Kings were forbid to put a Man to death for a ſingle Crime. By the ſame Law, great Lords were forbid to treat their Slaves rigorouſly for the firſt Fault. They were directed to conſider, whether the Miſchiefs they had done were greater than the Services they had render'd them; and in caſe they were, then it was allowed them to puniſh the Criminals as they thought fit.

What Difference, dear *Iſaac*, between theſe wiſe and prudent Laws, and the Opinions of certain *Nazarene* Doctors? Is it not in truth amazing, that People, enlightned only by the weak Rays of Reaſon, and remaining as yet under the dark Cloud of Paganiſm, ſhould have Ideas notwithſtanding of a Morality much more wiſe and equitable, than that

* Herodot. *Libr. I. pag.* 67.

taught

taught by the wiſe Men and Prieſts among thoſe who acknowledge the Spirituality and Unity of the Deity?

Some amongſt theſe ſeem to be ignorant of the Laws even of good Manners, and at the ſame time incapable of being reſtrained by the moſt ſacred Ties of Society. They have violated the Duties of Friendſhip; their Paſſions and their Prejudices have ſo blinded them, that they have thought it excuſeable to accuſe and blacken, by the baſeſt Calumnies, thoſe with whom they have lived on the beſt Terms, and with whom they had no other diſpute than what was occaſioned by ſome ſlight difference as to certain Points of Doctrine. *Jerome*, a Man of a bold Genius, one who wrote a vehement Style, which, it muſt be owned, in Purity comes little ſhort of that of *Cicero*, falls without mercy on his old Friend *Ruffinus*, becauſe he had embraced the Opinions of *Origen*. The good terms they had lived in, and the intimate Friendſhip which had ſubſiſted betwixt them for many Years, could not allay his Fury; he was forced to give way to his Choler, and let it empty itſelf in a Libel. Happy had it been for him, if he could have made uſe of the wiſe Leſſons which a heathen Writer hath given the World on this Subject. I mean, if he had practiſed the ſage Maxims delivered by *Cicero* in his Tract *de amicitia*; he would then, without doubt, inſtead of decrying *Ruffinus*, endeavour to convince him by fair means, and by uſing the moſt gentle methods.

True Tenderneſs hath no Taſte of Pleaſure, Satisfaction, or of Glory, if thoſe in whom it has an Intereſt, take no part in them *. This delicate Sen-

* *Nec fas eſſe ullâ me Voluptate frui,*
Decrevi tantiſper, dum ille abeſt meus
Particeps.

Terent. Heaut. *Act. I. Scene II.*

tim-nt

timent has been long out of the Heads of Divines, and controverſial Writers. There is nothing they do not ſacrifice to their Paſſions, and the moment any one of their Friends ceaſes to be of their opinion, their regard for him ceaſes alſo. Their Friendſhip is turned into Hate, and they offend alike againſt the Laws of Equity and the Rules of Decency. They would, if it depended upon them, exterminate, by Fire and Sword, all ſuch as are guilty of the unpardonable Crime of being no longer their Slaves *. Unhappy Effects of the Weakneſs of thoſe Principles, which make up that falſe and pernicious Morality that covers with an Appearance of Virtue thoſe Errors which are moſt contrary to the publick Good, and moſt deſtructive of the Peace of civil Society.

If a true and wholeſome Morality be known amongſt the *Nazarenes*, they are indebted for it wholly to Laymen. *Grotius* and *Puffendorf* have

* The Eccleſiaſticks have in all Ages found out fine Titles to gild their cruel Perſecutions againſt their Enemies, or rather againſt thoſe they did not like. "I ſhall "bury in Silence, *ſays a Biſhop of the fifth Century, who "was perſecuted for Neſtorianiſm*, the Chains, Confiſ- "cations, Marks of Infamy, Maſſacres worthy of Com- "paſſion, and of which the Enormity is ſuch, that thoſe "who were Eye-witneſſes of theſe Slaughters, ſcarce "believe what they ſaw. All theſe Tragedies were acted "by Biſhops; . . . . . amongſt them Effrontery "paſſes for a mark of Courage, they call their Cruelty, "Zeal, and their Fraud is honoured with the Name of "Wiſdom". Σιωπῶ τὰ δεσμὰ, τὰ δεσμοτήρια, τὰς ζημίας, τὰς ἀτιμίας, τὰς μάσιγας, τὰ τῶν Φόνων ἐλέεινα θεάματα, καὶ μετὰ τὴν πεῖραν ἀντὴν δὲ ὑπερβολὴν ἀσιγηθενα, καὶ ταῦτα δραματηργεῖται διὰ πολλῶν Ιερέων . . . . . ἡδρασύτης, ἀνδρεία νενέμιται, ἡ ὠμοτης ζῆλος ἀνομάσαι, ὁ δόλος σοφία λελογισαι. Etherius Tyrannorum Epiſcopus, *inter* Opera Theodoreti, *Tom. V. pag.* 688 & 689.

done

done more good to Mankind by their Writings, than all the Divines antient and modern. Theſe ſage Lawyers have gone up to the Fountain; they have examined with care the Motives furniſhed by the Law of Nature. They have ſupported theſe by the Authorities of the firſt *Nazarene* Legiſlators, whom I have before recommended, in correcting the Abuſes, and deſtroying the Errors which had been introduced by thoſe Men who were deſirous of eſtabliſhing as Points of Morality, whatever was dictated to them by their Caprice, their Hatred and their Ambition; they have ſhewn their Readers the naked Truth, which others had made it their buſineſs to conceal. However, notwithſtanding the Efforts they have made to become uſeful to all the World, they have hitherto been able to do but a Part of the Good they propoſed. Too many Divines, zealous in ſupporting their own Errors, and thoſe of their Predeceſſors, have done all they could; and are yet uſing their utmoſt Endeavours to diſcredit all Works, which teach a pure, ſimple, and humane Morality, and which diſapprove of all the Violences they would conſecrate under the ſpecious Pretext of Religion. *When the admirable Treatiſe of the Rights of* War *and of* Peace, ſays *Puffendorf**, *firſt appeared, the Eccleſiaſticks, inſtead of thanking the Author, roſe up againſt him, one and all, and not only procured it to be put into the* Index Expurgatorius, *by the Popiſh Inquiſition, at which one needs not be ſurprized, but alſo excited ſeveral Proteſtant Divines to write againſt, and to do their utmoſt to decry it. The ſame Practices were repeated on the publiſhing the* Law of Nature and of Nations; *the Jeſuits at* Vienna *procured its Prohibition.*

* Traité du Droit des Gens, *Préface de Barbeyrac, page 22.*

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Believe me, dear *Iſaac*, that this outrageous Averſion of the Divines towards all ſuch as have attempted to ſupport the Laws of Humanity, and to make known its Duties to their Fellow-Citizens, is the ſtrongeſt Obſtacle to ſound Morality; inſomuch that one may ſafely ſay, that there is more benefit to be received by reading the Books left us by Pagan Philoſophers, than thoſe of certain Doctors, who paſs notwithſtanding for the great Oracles of Mankind. Hapleſs are thoſe Nations, who are unacquainted with any other moral Syſtem, than ſuch an one as is to be pick'd up out of Books approved by the *Spaniſh*, *Portugueſe*, and *Italian* Inquiſitors!

Farewel, dear *Iſaac*, and addreſs thy Prayers to the Supreme Being, that he would be pleaſed to open the Eyes of all Mankind; for tho' we are *Jews*, we ought notwithſtanding to wiſh that the *Nazarenes* knew and practiſed a more equitable Morality. If the *Spaniards* and *Portugueſe* would become Diſciples of *Grotius* and *Puffendorf*, they would not ſlaughter our Brethren in the iniquitous manner they do. May the God of our Fathers heap Bleſſings upon thee.

London.

LETTER CLVII.

ISAAC ONIS *Caraite, formerly Rabbi at* Conſtantinople, *to* AARON MONCECA.

YOU are, without queſtion ſurprized, my dear *Monceca*, at my Silence, and accuſe me, I dare ſay, of Lazineſs and Negligence; but you will change

change your Opinion, when I tell you, that I have lately made a Voyage to *Jeruſalem*. The Nearneſs of the holy City of *David*, the Deſire I had of ſeeing that illuſtrious Capital of the Kingdom of our Anceſtors, the Facility of ſatisfying my Curioſity, engaged me to lay hold of the Opportunity which offered, of making a Trip in a Veſſel bound from *Alexandria* to *Saint John d'Acre*.

It is impoſſible for me to expreſs to you, my dear *Monceca*, the Agitations of Mind I felt in paſſing through *Paleſtine*. Joy, Grief, Pity, Anger, Reſpect, Spight; each of theſe Paſſions ſucceeded the other in my Heart, and ſometimes roſe there all at once. *Happy Place!* cried I, *where the God of* Iſrael *was ſerved heretofore with ſuch Splendor as his Worſhip deſerved; have my Eyes the pleaſure of beholding thee? But alas! in what ſtate are thy Cities and Palaces, of which thou wert formerly full? I ſee nothing but Ruins, melancholy Remains, which have eſcaped the Cruelty, the Rage and Fury of our Enemies. Juſt and good God, to whom alone belongeth Vengeance, remember thy People!*

At theſe Words, my dear *Monceca*, my Eyes were filled with Tears; and tho' I diſapprove the revengeful Temper of my Brethren, yet a holy Fury at that time ſeized me, and got the better of all my philoſophical Reflections. I proſtrated myſelf upon the Ground, and turning myſelf towards the Ruins of the Temple, from which I was not diſtant above fifteen Leagues; I there pour'd forth the Prayer which our Brethren uſe many times in the Year in their Synagogues.

Look down, O Lord! Look down on the Evils which our Enemies do unto us. Remember thou the Cruelties of Nebuchadonaſar, *and thoſe of* Titus; *and above all, O Lord remember* Adrian, *the moſt cruel of all the Deſtroyers of our Nation, who erected ſhameful Statues*

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on thy Altar, and defiled thy holy City with Idolatry: Who razed and utterly deſtroyed nine hundred and fourſcore Towns, and burnt four hundred and fourſcore Synagogues *. My Grief grew ſtill ſtronger, when I came to *Jeruſalem*, and I felt my Heart pierced with a thouſand Wounds, when I look'd upon the Ruins of the Temple. The *Turks* have built a Moſque upon its outward Court, which is ſtill paved with black and white Marble. In the middle, and where heretofore was the Holy of Holies, there is a *Mohammedan* Temple, covered with a grand Dome, ſupported with two Rows of Columns of Marble. In the midſt of this Dome there is a large Stone, from which the *Turks* aſſure us *Mohamed* went up into Heaven.

Judge, my dear *Monceca*, of the Deſpair of a true *Iſraelite*, at the ſight of this infamous Edifice, raiſed on the Foundation of *Solomon*'s Temple. The Grief, which I was unable to ſhake off, would not allow me to remain long at *Jeruſalem*. Satisfied therefore with kiſſing the holy Earth, which our Poſterity ſhall one day purify from all the Impieties, and all the Abominations which our Enemies have committed there, I returned to *Cairo*, carrying with me a Box full of the precious Earth on which the Temple was built. I did this not in Imitation of the Superſtition of the *Nazarenes*, who, becauſe they have an infinite Reſpect for certain Places at *Jeruſalem*, believe that there is ſomething more in that Earth than in any other; but becauſe I was

* There is in the *Jewiſh* Ritual a Hymn for the ninth Day of the Month *Ab*, in which we read theſe Words, *Recordare, Domine, qualis fuerit Adrianus, Crudelitatis Conſilia amplexus, conſuluit Idola ſe pervertentia, & ſuſtulit combuſſitque quadringinta & octoginta Synagogas.* Tractatus Talmudicus, *Giſſin* dictus, apud Joan. à Lent, de Judæorum Pſeudo-Meſſiis, *pag.* 18.

glad to have it by me as an efficacious Memorial of the Evils our Crimes have brought upon our Country, and that I might thereby be excited to be once more virtuous.

When I conſider, dear *Monceca*, the Miſchiefs our Fathers have ſuffered, I am inclined to believe that they were guilty of ſome prodigious Crimes, the Knowledge of which hath not reached us. Nay, I muſt own to you freely, that were I not moſt firmly perſuaded of the Truth of our Religion, I ſhould, on examining the Ills we have ſuffered, ſince the Sects of the *Nazarenes* commenced, be led to believe the Prophecies were accompliſhed, and that the God of *Iſrael* having abandoned us his People, had made choice of ſome other.

Without ſtaying to conſider the firſt Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* by *Titus*, I run over in my mind, with Aſtoniſhment and Horror, thoſe Evils with which the *Jews* were overwhelmed by *Adrian*. After that cruel Emperor had ſlain *Barcokebas*, and taken the City of *Bitter*, the laſt Reſource of *Iſrael*, he ordered the Image of a Hog, cut in Marble, to be placed on that Gate of *Jeruſalem* which looks towards *Bethlehem*. He cauſed a Theatre, and various Temples to falſe Gods, to be erected with Stones collected out of the Ruins of the Temple of *Solomon*, and ſet up the Statue of *Jupiter* in the Place of the holy Sanctuary. He forbid the *Jews*, on pain of death, to enter *Jeruſalem*, and cut off the Ears of a Multitude, whom he cauſed to be tranſported into ſeveral Countries.

If the Miſeries we daily ſuffer in *Spain* and *Portugal*, did not ſhew us too clearly how far the Malice of Men may extend, one could not give credit to the Cruelties which our Authors aſſure us were exerciſed on our Nation by *Adrian* and his Soldiers. They ſay, *that after the taking of* Bitter, *the Slaugh-*

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ter was ſo great, and Rivulets of Blood ran with ſuch Force, that they carried before them Stones of four Pounds Weight, and diſcoloured the Sea at a conſiderable diſtance *. They tell us farther, *that when the* Romans *had poſſeſſed themſelves of this City, they drove all the Scholars into one Place, and there burnt them, with their Books; becauſe at the beginning of the Siege theſe Youths had made uſe of their Pen-knives and Steel-pencils, to kill their Enemies* †. Thus they made it a capital Crime for Perſons to defend themſelves when they were attacked. The Loſs of *Bitter* was attended with the entire Diſperſion of our Nation. The Ills we endured under *Titus* were but ſlight things, compared to what we ſuffered under *Adrian*. He cauſed Numbers of *Jews* to be ſold at Fairs, at the ſame Price with Horſes; and ſent Multitudes into *Egypt*, where they periſhed with Hunger, Thirſt and Fatigue. Is it poſſible, dear *Monceca*, that God ſhould expoſe a People to ſuch Miſchiefs, if their Crimes had not merited ſo rude a Chaſtiſement? I cannot think but I am in the right to ſay, that our Authors have hid from us the true Cauſes why the Almighty thus abandoned his People to the Rage of their Enemies. Surely the *Jews* had committed ſome great Crimes againſt the *Romans*, with which the Deity was juſtly offended. Under colour of Religion perhaps they had committed Murders, and defiled themſelves with the Blood of Innocents. We ſhall ſee ſome cauſe to credit theſe Suſpicions, if we give credit to the Writings of a *Nazarene* Father, who lived within two Ages

* *Quinimo Sanguis rapiebat ſecum Petras Magnitudinis quadraginta Modiorum, donec ad quadraginta Milliaria uſque in Oceanum fluerit.* Lent, *pag.* 18.

† *Iſta Pubes principio Hoſtes Impetum facientes Graphiis ſuis confodiebat. Cùm verò hi prævalerent, Urbemque cæpiſſent, involverunt Puerulos illos cum Libris ſuis, eoſque Igne ſic cremarunt.* Joan. à Lent, *pag.* 13.

after *Adrian*. By him we are informed, that the famous *Barcokebas*, the Author of the War made by the *Jews* againſt the *Romans*, was a celebrated Impoſtor, who plunged our Nation into an Abyſs of Miſery, out of which it has not delivered itſelf to this day. This Wretch, who called himſelf the *Meſſiah*, made uſe of a Trick to breathe Fire and Smoke *, which is now common to our Jugglers. By this means he excited the *Jews* to revolt, and by an Exceſs of Fanaticiſm, ſcarce to be diſtinguiſhed from Madneſs, he obliged all the *Jews* who came to ſerve in his Army, which became at length to be two hundred thouſand ſtrong, to cut off a Finger, as an Inſtance of their Courage. This Monſter, born for the Deſtruction of his Brethren, ſeduced almoſt the whole Nation. They entred into his Views, ſhook off for a time the *Roman* Yoke, and, in Extenuation of their Revolt, and of theſe Murders, ſet up the moſt frivolous Pretext that ever was heard of. To this our Authors agree, and, by the Reaſons they offer in defence of the *Jews* taking Arms, juſtify all the Cruelties of the *Romans*.

If we believe what is told us in the *Talmud*, the War againſt *Adrian* was occaſioned by the putting ſeveral *Romans* to death moſt cruelly and unjuſtly. Therein we are told †, that it was a Cuſtom among the *Jews*, for a Man to plant a Cedar when a Son was born unto him, and a Pine at the Birth of a Daughter; they made uſe of the Timber of theſe Trees

* *Ut ille Barcokebas, Auctor Seditionis Judaicæ, Stipulam in Ore ſuccenſam, Anhelitu ventilabat, ut flammas evomere videretur.* Hieronymi Apologia II. adverſus Ruffinum.

† *In More fuit ut cùm naſceretur Infans plantarent Cedrum, cùm Infantula Pinum: cùmque Nati contraherent Matrimonium, ex iis conficerent Thalamum. Die quâdam tranſiliit Filia Cæſaris, & confractum eſt ei Crus Carpenti*

Trees for making the nuptial Bed, when thoſe Children came to be eſtabliſhed in the World at whoſe Birth they were planted: The Daughter of the Emperor *Adrian* paſſing through *Judea*, the Vehicle in which ſhe was carried, broke down, and the *Romans* not knowing the uſe to which thoſe Trees were deſtin'd, cut down one of them to repair the Princeſs's Carriage; hereupon the *Jews* roſe in an Inſtant, and murder'd all her Train, for daring to deſtroy a Tree they held ſacred.

There can be nothing more ridiculous, or more falſe than this Story, ſince nothing is more certain than that the Emperor *Adrian* never had a Daughter. But admitting the Story to be true, did not our Anceſtors deſerve to be ſeverely puniſhed, for revolting on ſo ſlight an Occaſion? Was it not a frightful Act of Barbarity to ſlaughter the Guards of a Princeſs, for a thing of which they knew not the Conſequences?

Without having recourſe to the chimerical Notions of the *Talmud*, let us, *Monceca*, freely own, that the Impoſtor *Barcokebas* prevailing on the mutinous Diſpoſition of our Anceſtors, drew upon them thoſe Ills, by which they were cruſhed. Inſtead of thinking of the Miſchiefs which fell upon them in the days of *Titus*, and which ought to have ſerved 'em for Warnings, they irritated the *Romans* by their Diſobedience; and, by their Cruelties and Murders, offended God, in whom alone they ought to have put their Truſt. It ought therefore to be fairly owned, that as never any People in the World ſuffered as we have done; ſo did there never exiſt

penti Cedrum iſtiuſmodi exciderunt, atque eam attulerunt. Inſurrexerunt in eos Judæi, atque eos ceciderunt. Relatum eſt Cæſari rebellare Judæos. Profectus ille in eos iracundus excidit totum Cornu Iſraelis. Tractatus Talmudico-Babyl. *Giſſin* dictus, *folio* 57. *apud* Joh. à Lent de Judæorum Pſeudo-Meſſiis, *pag.* 7.

any whoſe Cruelty, Pride, and Obſtinacy, did ſo much merit to be abandoned by God. And which is ſtill worſe for us, moſt of the Crimes of our Nation have been committed through the Inſtigation of ſuch as have pretended to defend Religion by committing 'em.

We ought to have our paſt Misfortunes everlaſtingly before our Eyes, in order to hinder our becoming Dupes to ſome new Impoſtor. Whenever the Meſſiah ſhall come to put an end to our Slavery, and to break our Chains in pieces, he will not need to direct us to dip our Hands in Blood. His Power alone will ſubdue the proudeſt Hearts, and his Will muſt ſuffice to do whatſoever he deſires: To him nothing will be impoſſible; falſe Prophets and Impoſtors only found their Doctrine in the Deſtruction of a Part of Mankind. Is it not madneſs and folly to maintain, that God will ſend us a Deliverer, who ſhall authorize us to commit all ſorts of Cruelties? Thoſe who form ſuch an Idea of the Meſſiah, make little difference between him and a *Spaniſh* Inquiſitor. Let us, *Monceca*, reject theſe idle Notions, and let us be aſſured, that our Deliverer, inſtead of lighting up new Diſturbances in the World, will ſpread Peace and Tranquillity over all the Earth.

Farewel, dear *Monceca*, form no hopes but what are wiſe and worthy of the Saviour whom we expect.

Cairo,

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LETTER CLVIII.

AARON MONCEÇA, *to* ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a Rabbi at* Conſtantinople.

THE *Nazarenes*, dear *Iſaac*, ſeem to have reaſon for thoſe Reproaches with which they load moſt of our Authors. They accuſe them of having invented a thouſand odious Stories injurious to their Legiſlator, and to have falſified antient Hiſtory with equal Ignorance and Malice. It is impoſſible for us to deny, that the *Jewiſh* Writers have given their Adverſaries juſt reaſon to make theſe Complaints. For without ſpeaking of the groſs Fables which are inſerted in the *Talmud*, on purpoſe to hurt the Memory of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, whoſe Syſtem of Morality is ſo pure, that no *Iſraelite* Philoſopher can forbear admiring it; what Writings, big with Calumny, have not the *Rabbins* ſcatter'd abroad ever ſince the firſt Appearance of this Sect? I do not know, my Friend, whether a certain Book has fallen into your hands, the Author of which lived about four or five hundred Years ago, but who has diſguiſed himſelf as well as he could, with intent to make his Work appear as if written ſhortly after the death of the Legiſlator of the *Nazarenes*. This Fraud, however, is eaſily diſcovered, and may be clearly made out; ſo that the *Nazarenes*, far from fearing its Conſequences, have themſelves taken the pains to publiſh them: They have cauſed it to be printed, accompanied with ſuch learned Notes, as

cover with Confuſion, not only the Author of this fabulous Tale, but alſo our whole Nation; fond of Stories prejudicial to the *Nazarenes*, and incapable of diſtinguiſhing Truth from Falſhood *. Thoſe who adopt, without Examination, all the Calumnies that are publiſhed againſt our Adverſaries, are not aware that in doing this they furniſh them with Arms againſt themſelves. Such as make uſe of their Reaſon, and who are not blinded with Prejudice, are filled with Indignation, when they ſee us reaſoning on Facts notoriouſly falſe, and thenceforward give no ſort of credit to the Writings of a Man who bluſhes not at the advancing a notorious Falſhood, of which he is at the time he advances it perfectly convinced. This is the reaſon that the Truth gains no ground, but is in a manner obſcured and buried under the Falſities which accompany it.

There can be nothing ſo horrid, dear *Iſaac*, as the Impoſtures inſerted in the Work of which I am ſpeaking. When our *Rabbies* maintain the Legiſlator of the *Nazarenes* not to be the Meſſias, I look upon them as Men acting conformable to the Principles of their Religion; but when they invent the moſt atrocious Falſhoods, I do not ſee how they are to be excuſed. It is a Truth of publick Notoriety, that *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* was born of a Woman, whoſe Morals were perfectly pure. His Followers ſay, that this Woman conceived by the Operation of the Holy Spirit. The more moderate *Jews* content themſelves with making him the Son of *Joſeph* and

* The Title of this Work runs thus: ספר תולדות ישוע הנוצרי Hiſtoria Jeſchuæ Nazareni, à Judæis blaſphemè corrupta, ex Manuſcripto hactenus inedito nunc demum edita, ac Verſione & Notis (quibus Judæorum Nequitiæ propiùs deteguntur, & Authoris Aſſerta Ineptiæ ac Impietatis convincuntur,) illuſtrata, à Joh. Jac. Huldrico Tigurino. *Lugduni Batavorum*, 1705, *in* 8vo.

Mary;

Mary; but the Author of this Manuſcript hath publiſhed, with reſpect to his Birth, a Fable every way abſurd.

According to him*, under the Reign of *Herod*, a certain Perſon, whoſe Name was *Papus*, the Son of *Jeh*, married a Woman whoſe Name was *Miriam*,

* *Ecce, Tempore Regni Herodis Proſelyti, erat Vir quiſpiam cui Nomen Papus F. Jeh. Huic Uxor erat Nomine Miriam, Filia Kalphus, Soror R. Simeonis Hakalph. Erat autem illa Miriam (celebris illa) antequam in Matrimonium duceretur, Comptrix Capillorum muliebrium. Nupta illa erat Papo, juxta Legem Moſis & Iſraëlis, Formæque Speciosſitate ſupra alias eminebat. Oriunda ex Tribu Benjamin. Nec Maritus ejus Papus ei permittebat ex Ædibus egredi in publicum, ſed Fores eum in finem clauſas habebat: ſuſpicabatur enim laſcivos Homines (Formæ præſtantiâ illectos) Rem fortè cum illâ habituros. Factum verò eſt, ut Die uno, quo Jejunium Expiationum agitabatur, Feneſtras ejus tranſiret improbus ille Joſeph Pandira, Nazarenus, qui Formæ etiam Pulchritudine inſignis erat. Is, cùm animad verteret, Virum in Ædibus tunc nullum eſſe, elatâ voce inclamat:* Miriam, Miriam, quo uſque ſedebis ſecluſa? *Proſpectat illa de Feneſtrâ, eique reſpondet:* Joſeph, Joſeph, liberam me fac, ſodes! *It ergo Joſephus, & adducit ſecum ſcalam, Miriam è Feneſtrâ deſcendit, & fugiunt ambo Hieroſolymâ Bethlehemam, ipſo Expiationis Die Jejunio, ibique degunt Diebus multis nemini cogniti. Concubuit autem Joſephus cum Miriam ipſâ Exp. Die, Feria eſuriali. Concepit illa, eique parit Anno vertente Jeſchuam Nazarenum. Concepit rurſus, & peperit Filios Filiaſque* †.

Hiſt. Jeſchuæ, *pag.* 4. & 5.

† *Filios Filiaſque*] Secundum Literam Nebulo intelligere petulanter voluit quæ in Evangelio memorantur de Chriſti Fratribus & Sororibus, *Matth.* XII. 46. XIII. 55, 56, &c. Cum tamen noſſe facilè potuiſſet recutitus, Phraſi Heb. *Fratres* denotare quoſvis *propinqua Cognatione conjunctos*, &c.

Huldrici Notæ in Hiſt. Jeſchuæ, *pag.* 10.

the Daughter of *Calphus*, and Siſter of *Rabbi Simeon Hakalf*. This *Miriam* was very handſome, and *Papus* her Husband very jealous. He therefore took care to have her ſhut up conſtantly. His Precautions, however, in the end proved fruitleſs. On a certain Feaſt-day, when this jealous Man was gone abroad, one *Joſeph Pandira*, a *Nazarene*, came under the Window of *Miriam*'s Room, and ſpoke to her thus: *Miriam! Miriam! how long will you continue thus impriſoned?* To which ſhe anſwered, looking out of her Window, *Joſeph! Joſeph! deliver me, and I will go with thee.* *Joſeph* went and brought a Ladder, and *Miriam* got out of the Window. They went then together to *Bethlehem*, and at the end of a Year *Miriam* bore *Jeſus*, and afterwards many Sons and Daughters.

Can there be any thing more abſurd, dear *Iſaac*, than this odious, this infamous Falſhood, to which the greateſt Part of our own Authors give the lye. This the able Editor of that Book hath made clearly appear in his Notes. He has farther ſhew'd, that the *Jewiſh* Author, in order to give an air of Truth to his Fables, hath taken ſeveral things from the *Nazarene* Scriptures, and disfigured them to make them ſerve his purpoſe. For Inſtance, in the cloſe of the laſt Paſſage, the Sons and Daughters are plainly copied from the Brethren and Siſters mentioned in the Goſpels, tho' theſe Terms frequently ſignify no more than near Relations.

The Hatred of this *Jewiſh* Writer is not ſufficiently glutted, by defaming the Legiſlator of the *Nazarenes* as to his Birth; he therefore proceeds to make him a Parricide, and his Fable on this Subject is more groſs, and more ridiculous than the firſt. He tells us *, that finding himſelf ſlighted at *Nazareth*

* *Accidit autem ut Jeſchua, his viſis, cognitoque ſe furium eſſe, ac idcirca Notâ (Calvitii) à Sapientibus dehoneſtatum,*

zareth on account of his Birth, he went home to his Mother, pretending to have the Tooth-ach: He told her, that he had found in his Books an eaſy Remedy for his Pain, which conſiſted in holding the Nipple of her Breaſts between his Teeth. The Mother no ſooner conſented, than he told her, he would never let go his hold, until ſhe confeſſed to him the Truth of his Birth; which when ſhe had done, he was ſo enraged, that he ſlew *Joſeph*, and then retired into *Galilee*.

Is it poſſible, dear *Iſaac*, that our Brethren the *Jews* ſhould be ſo wanting to themſelves, as not to ſtifle a Book filled with ſuch evident Falſhoods? Or how is it poſſible they could avoid ſeeing that, by ſuffering it to go abroad in the World, they ſhould juſtify the Reproaches heap'd upon 'em by the *Nazarenes*, as on Men void of all regard either for

honeſtatum, abierit Nazaretham, conveneritque Matrem ſuam, ibique Ὀδονταλγία *ſe graviter affligi ſimulans, Matri oſſeruerit, ſe cum Academicis Studiis incumberet, probatum contra Dentium Dolores Remedium audiviſſe; illudque hoc eſſe, ſi Mater Afflicti Mammas immittat inter Januam Cardineſque medias, Dentibuſque laborans eas exſugat, eum revalituram. Reſpondit Mater (indulgentiſſimè, Malique nihil ſuſpicata)* Agedum, Fili mî, ponam ego Mammas meas inter Cardines medias: tu eas exſuge. *Mater itaque Mammarum alteram interponit: ſed Jeſchua Fores claudens, Mammas Maternas graviſſimè affligit, Matremque ita alloquitur:* Non te priùs dimitto, quâ mihi edixeris, quâ ratione in Lucem editus ego ſim, & quæ Studia olim tua fuerint. *Reſpondit ergo Mater:* Spurius tu es. Maritus enim alter etiam mihi eſt, cui Nomen Papus. Progenitor autem tuus Joſeph in Matrimonium me accepit, non accepto a legitimo Marito Divortii Libello. Omnes itidem Liberi mei reliqui Spurii ſunt. *Hæc cum percepiſſet, Jeſchua Irâ excandeſcit, & abiens Patrem Joſephum occidit: poſteà verò in Galilæam Judææ aufugit.*

Hiſt. Jeſchuæ, *pag.* 32, & 33.

Truth

Truth or Decency, when violating either of them will enable them to injure their Adverſaries? When a Philoſopher reads theſe Abſurdities, and reflects that they are not only approved by the *Jews*, but maintained by 'em to be inconteſtible Truths; has he not a right to conclude, that all our Authors in general are Cheats and Deceivers, and that ſuch as give any credit to their Works, are Creatures void of common Senſe? Was there ever ſuch a pitiful Tale as that of the Tooth-ach, and all its Conſequences? I ſay nothing of the Death of *Joſeph*, becauſe that is a Fact to which not only all the *Nazarene* Authors give the lye, but alſo all the Writings of our ancient *Rabbins*, who, amidſt their moſt malicious Reproaches, never ſay a word of this ſort.

For my part, I am no longer aſtoniſhed, *Iſaac*, at the hatred the *Nazarenes* bear to us *Jews*. The Exceſs to which moſt of our Writers carry their Diſcourſes, ſeem to me the juſt Cauſe thereof; and I am rather amazed, that, conſidering our Behaviour, they bear with us at all. I readily own one thing, that theſe ridiculous Tales, odious and infamous as they are, are properly treated by our Adverſaries, who effectually revenge the flat Jeſts our Authors break upon them, by treating their Writings as they do with the utmoſt Contempt.

Before I finiſh this Letter, I muſt take notice of an Attempt made by this Author to ridicule a Miracle of the *Nazarene* Legiſlator. He went, ſays he *, with two of his Diſciples to an Inn, and asking

* *Venerunt itaque inde in Diverſorium. Quæsit ibi Jeſus ex Hoſpite:* Eſt-ne tibi unde hi edant? *Reſpondit Hoſpes:* Non mihi ſuppetit, niſi Anſerculus unus aſſatus. *Sumit ergo Jeſus Anſerem, illiſque apponit, aiens:* Anſer hic exiguus nimis eſt, quàm ut a tribus comedi debeat. Dormitum eamus: & ille, qui ſomniarit Somnium optimum

ing the Hoſt if he had any thing to eat, he anſwered that he had only a Gooſe; whereupon turning to his Diſciples, he ſaid, This is too little for us all, let us go to our reſt, and he that has the beſt Dream, let him eat it when he awakes. They did ſo; but in the Night *Jehuda* aroſe, and eat the Gooſe. When Day broke, *Peter* ſaid, I dreamed I ſat on the right hand of the Son of God. I am he, ſaid his Maſter, and I dreamed thou didſt ſit at my right hand; mine therefore is the better Dream. But *Jehuda* ſaid, I dreamed that I eat the Gooſe. Hereupon they began to look for it; but in vain, *Jehuda* had really eat it.

A Nurſe does not quiet her Child with ſuch ſimple Stuff as this. Such low, ſuch pitiful Abſurdities, were reſerved for the laſt Shifts of the *Jews!* Have not the *Nazarenes* all the reaſon in the world, rather to ſcorn and deſpiſe theſe mean malicious Efforts of our Spight, than to be angry or in any degree vexed at them? Let us pray to the ſovereign Being, dear *Iſaac*, that he would enlighten the Minds of all *Iſraelites*, teach them to deſpiſe theſe Fables, and not to attempt to outface Truth, by coining ſuch evident and abſurd Rhapſodies of Error and Impoſture.

Farewel, dear *Iſaac*, live content and happy.

London.

mum comedet Anſerem ſolus. *Decumbunt igitur. Tempeſtâ verò Nocte ſurgit Jehuda, & Anſerem devorat. Mane itaque illis ſurgentibus, Petrus ait:* Somnio mihi viſus fui aſſidere Solio Filii Dei Schaddai: *Jeſus ait,* Ego ſum Filius ille Dei Schaddai, & ſomniavi te prope me ſedere. Ecce ergo me præſtantius quid ſomniaſſe te. Quare meum erit Anſerem comedere. *Jehuda tandem aiebat:* Ego quidem ipſemet in Somnio comedi Anſerem. *Quærit ergo Anſerem Jeſus, ſed fruſtrà; Jehuda enim devorabat illum.*

Hiſt. Jeſchuæ, *pag.* 51.

LET-

LETTER CLIX.

ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople, *to* AARON MONCECA.

I Am perfectly well acquainted, dear *Monceca*, with the Book you mentioned in your laſt Letter. It is one of thoſe pitiful Performances which have ſprung from the *Rabbies*, and is as diſhonourable to *Judaiſm*, as that wretched Collection of Fables and Viſions, the *Talmud*. By embracing the wiſe Syſtem of the *Caraites*, I am no longer obliged to pay any regard to theſe fictitious Writings, dictated by Spleen, and which Paſſion and Prejudice have conſecrated to the Service of Religion, or rather have veiled themſelves under the ſpecious Pretence of doing Religion Service.

The Paſſages you have cited from the pretended Hiſtory of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, are far from being the moſt ridiculous things in that Collection. Behold one, which in my Judgment exceeds in Abſurdity whatever has been written in that kind *.

Jehuda,

* *Jehuda verò clanculum ſe ad Regem confert, eique nunciat, Jeſum cum ſuis eſſe in Ædibus Puræ. Mittit ergo Rex juvenes Sacerdotes in Ædes Puræ, qui cùm illuc veniſſent ad Jeſum aiunt:* Homines nauci non ſumus, & in te ac Verba tua credimus. Tantum nobis da, ut coram Facie noſtrâ Miracula patres. *Patravit itaque Jeſus coram iis Mira, per Nomen immenſum. Ederunt autem Jeſus & Diſcipuli ejus ipſâ Die Expiationum, Feriâ Eſuriali,*

Jehuda, ſays that Author, *went to the King privately, and told him that Jeſus was arrived. That Prince ſent the young Prieſts to meet him, and they ſaid to Jeſus*, We are neither Deceivers nor wicked Perſons; we give credit to your Diſcourſe. All that we deſire is, that you would do before us ſome Miracle. *Jeſus yielded to their Requeſt, and by virtue of the all-powerful Name of God, did, in their ſight, many Wonders. Now Jeſus and his Diſciples did not obſerve the Faſts appointed even on the moſt ſolemn Occaſions. On the great Day of Expiation they drank Wine mingled with the Waters of Oblivion, and went to ſteep their Senſes in Sleep. But in the Night, Soldiers ſurrounded the Houſe wherein they were, and bound them. Jeſus did all he could to recollect the all-powerful Name, but he could not. . . . . The Soldiers then conducted him*

Eſuriali, nec jejunarunt. Biberunt etiam de Vino, quod miſcuum erat Aquis Oblivionis, cubitumque poſtea iverunt. Circa tempeſtam verò Noctem, Satellites Regis ad ejus Mandatum Ædis Puræ Corona circumdant. Aperit Pura Januam: ingrediuntur Satellites Conclave Jeſu & Aſſeclarum ejus, eoſque Compedibus conſtringunt. Jeſus itaque intendebat Animum in Nomen immenſum, ſed non valebat illud aſſequi, omnium enim ejus Connexionum oblitus erat. Tunc dixit Jeſus: De me dictum eſt; *Vinum & Muſtum, &c.* (*Hoſ.* iv. 11.) *Satellites autem Jeſum & Aſſeclas abducunt in Carcer, dictum* Domus Blaſphemantis, *quia Probris & Blaſphemiis affecit Deum. Manè itaque Regi nunciabatur Jeſum & Sequaces ejus captos eſſe, & Carceri incluſos. Præcepit verò Rex, cuſtodire eos uſque ad Feſtum Tabernaculorum. Veniebat tunc omnis Populus Domini, ad ſe proſternandum coram Domino in Feſto, juxtà id quod præceperat Moſes. Juſſit ergo Rex lapidare Jeſu Diſcipulos extra Hieroſolymam, & viderunt omnes Iſraelitæ, & Lapidibus obruerunt Sequaces Jeſu. Univerſus autem Iſrael Cantica & Laudes deferebat Deo Iſraeli, quòd Viros hoſce Belial in Manus eorum tradiderit.*

Hiſt. Jeſchuæ, *pag.* 67, 68, & 69.

and

and his Disciples to a certain Prison, called the House of Blasphemy, *because they had blasphemed God. In the Morning therefore it was told the King, that Jesus and his Followers were apprehended. The King gave Directions thereupon, that they should be kept close Prisoners until the* Feast *of* Tabernacles, *when, as the Law of* Moses *directs, all the People came to assemble before the Lord. Then the King gave command that Jesus's Disciples should be carried out of* Jerusalem, *and stoned; which was executed before the Eyes of all* Israel, *who sang Songs of Joy, and render'd Glory to God, for having enabled them to punish thus these wicked Men.*

Without animadverting, dear *Monceca*, on the numerous Falsities and notorious Blunders in this Passage, which are so easily and effectually destroy'd, not only by the *Nazarene*, but also by our own Historians, give me leave to mark out an evident Absurdity which every unlearned Reader must discern. If the Disciples of *Jesus* were stoned about the Feast of *Tabernacles*, and himself crucified some small time after without ever coming out of Prison, how came the Sect of the *Nazarenes* to spread, and to become so powerful? Who were they who went to propagate its Doctrines into the most distant Climates? How, being thus destroyed in the Beginning, came it to spring again out of its ashes? The Rabbinical Historian foresaw some of these Difficulties, and endeavoured to provide against them, but in as lame a manner as if he had drank some of his own Waters of Oblivion, which hindered *Jesus* from recollecting the all-powerful name. Is it not an incontestible method of proving Facts, to ground the Evidence produced in their favour, on poetical Pagan Fictions, and the Dreams of the Cabbalists, the greatest Fools in the whole World? For there, *Monceca*, amongst these worthy People must we find the Sources of this Water of Oblivion, which never swelled

ſwelled any Streams but thoſe of *Lethe*, and that boundleſs Power of the ineffable Name, which indeed has had the Power of turning the heads of innumerable Cabbaliſts paſt all recovery.

This Man, whoſe Writings you contemn ſo much, ought, in my Opinion, to hold the ſupreme Rank among worthleſs Authors, for I think verily none of his Brethren ever came up to what he has written concerning the Eſtabliſhment of *Nazareniſm* after the Death of *Jeſus*.* "It came to paſs, "*ſays he*, that the Inhabitants of *Ai* having heard "that *Jeſus* was crucified, had a ſharp Diſpute "with the *Iſraelites*. They ſlew all they could "meet with, and having murdered upwards of two "thouſand, the *Iſraelites* durſt no longer go up to "the Temple on the appointed Feaſts. The King "therefore made war upon the Inhabitants of *Ai*, "but he found it impracticable to ſubdue them. "There were however, at this time, in the City, a "great number of ſeditious Spirits, Lovers of No-"veltiesand prone to Inſurrections. Some of theſe "unquiet

* *Factum verò eſt, cum inaudirent Aitae ſuſpenſum eſſe Jeſchu, ut Litem indicerent acerbam Iſraeli. Quando ergo offenderunt Aitae Iſraelitam, eum Neci dederunt; & occiſa ita ſunt Iſraelitarum bina millia Virorum. Nec poterant Iſraelitae adſcendere in Feſtum, propter Viros Ai: Bellum igitur gerebat Rex cum Aitis. Sed eóſdem ſubigere non valebat. Nam ipſis etiam Hieroſolymis increſcebat Numerus Hominum improbiſſimorum coram Rege. Quidam autem illorum Hominum Propudia Ai ibant, Mendaciaque Aitis referebant, ſcilicet triduo poſtquam ſuſpenſus fuiſſet Jeſchu Ignem de Cœlo cecidiſſe, Jeſchu circumcinxiſſe, indeque illum e Veſtigio revixiſſe, poſteaque in Cœlum aſcendiſſe. Fidem vero adhibebant Aitae Verbis Sceleſtorum illorum, & Jurisjurandi Fide interpoſitâ conſpirabant ſe Crimen ulturos in Iſraelitis, cujus Reatum ſibi conſciverant Jeſchu ſuſpendendo. Jehuda autem cum videret*

" unquiet People found means to confer with cer-
" tain Perſons who dwelt in *Ai*, and told them a
" thouſand Fables. They ſaid, that three Days
" after the Death of *Jeſus*, Fire fell from Heaven,
" ſurrounded his Body, reſtored him to Life, and
" that he afterwards aſcended to Heaven. The
" Inhabitants of *Ai* giving credit to all that they
" were told, became more and more determined
" to revenge on the *Iſraelites* the Death of *Jeſus*,
" whom they thought unjuſtly crucified. *Jehuda*
" knowing the Diſpoſitions of the Citizens of *Ai*,
" wrote to them to diſſuade them in theſe Terms:
" *The Peace of God reſts not on the impious*; Why
" *then do the People ſuffer themſelves to be deluded*
" *with Lyes? Come to* Jeruſalem, *and bury your ſup-*
" *poſed Prophet*, &c. Hereupon the Inhabitants of
" *Ai* ſent Deputies to *Jeruſalem*, who were ſhewn
" the Body of *Jeſus* where it was interred. Theſe
" Deputies returning to the City, inſtead of giving

videret horrenda Aitas Facinora moliri, ad eos Literas in hunc Senſum dedit. Non eſt Pax, ait Dominus, Impiis. Quare conſpirant Gentes, & Nationes meditantur Vanitatem? Venite, quæſo, Hieroſolymam, & conſpicite Pſeudo-Prophetam veſtrum. Ecce enim ille eſt cadaver protritum, Canis mortuus & fœtidus, quem depoſui ego in Reconditorio Stercorum! *Inutiles ergo illi Homines, cum haec perciperent, Hieroſolymam pergunt, ibique vident Jeſum depoſitum in Loco Sordibus & Stercoribus inquinatiſſimo. Recipientes autem ſe in Ai, divulgant ibi pura Mendacia eſſe, quae tranſcripſerit Jehuda.* Nam ecce (*aiebant*) venimus nos Hieroſolymam, & plures ibi ſunt qui contra Regem inſurrexerunt, eumque expulerunt, quòd noluerit credere in Jeſum: multi quoque Sapientum occiſi ſunt ob ipſam etiam Infidelitatem in Jeſum. *Aitae itaque credebant Verbis mendacibus Hominum nauci, Bellumque indicebant Iſrael.*

Hiſt. Jeſchuæ, *pag.* 95, 96, 97.

" glory

" glory to the Truth, affirmed all that was con-
" tained in *Jehuda*'s Epiſtle to be notorious Lyes and
" Falſhoods, as alſo that Numbers, in *Jeruſaſem*
" itſelf, were come over to *Jeſus* and had revolted
" againſt the King. On this News the People of
" *Ai* cut the Throats of many wiſe Citizens who
" had been Enemies to Jeſus, and continued the
" War as vigorouſly as ever againſt the *Iſraelites*."

Behold, *Monceca*, a Series of Facts, of which no other Author, Pagan or Chriſtian, ever ſpake a Word. It is really matter of Surprize, how a Perſon ever ſo well trained to lying, could, without bluſhing, give ſuch a Romance as this to the World as true Hiſtory. This *Rabbi* ought at leaſt to have given ſome appearance of Truth to his Fictions. There never was any thing ſo ill-contrived, ſo inconnected, or ſo contradictory, as to ſay, that the Diſciples of Jeſus were ſtoned, that the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* were pleaſed therewith; that People from *Ai* came and ſaw the dead Body of Jeſus; and yet that theſe very People ſhould fight moſt zealouſly in his Quarrel. Have not the *Nazarenes* all the reaſon in the World to treat our *Rabbies* as a Crew of Impoſtors, and to decry *Judaiſm*, becauſe built upon their Writings, and conſequently reſting on a wretched Maſs of Lyes, ridiculous Fictions, and groundleſs Calumnies?

If all our Brethren of the Houſe of *Iſrael* were of the ſame Diſpoſition with the *Caraites*, they would not ſtand in fear of any ſuch Reproaches. Our Faith is grounded ſolely on the ſacred Scriptures. Our Oracles alone are infallible, and therefore we are never deceived. In order to defend our Cauſe againſt the Chriſtians, we are not obliged to have recourſe to Frauds unworthy of an honeſt Man. They attack us from the Scriptures, and in the ſame Scriptures we find matter for our Defence. If they could

could once prove to our Satisfaction the Prophecies to be accompliſhed, we ſhould readily go over to their Faith. But we do not conceive this poſſible, that the great Lamp of *Iſrael* ſhould as yet have ſhined amongſt us. When he ſhall appear, his Light ſhall be viſible unto all. It will be to no purpoſe to ſhut our Eyes. His Rays will pierce through the thickeſt Darkneſs; and therefore we ought not to ſuppoſe the *Meſſiah*, coming to free all the *Jews*, ſhould leave the greateſt Part of them in Ignorance and Blindneſs.

This, dear *Monceca*, is the capital Argument againſt the *Nazarenes*. They ſay the *Meſſiah* is come. What good has he done the *Jews?* For from them, and for them, the Scriptures ſay he was to come into the World. However, all ſorts of Miſchiefs have fallen on our Nation. We are all driven from *Jeruſalem*. The Temple of the living God is deſtroyed. Sacrifices are no longer offered. We are a Prey to the Malice, Hatred, and Cruelty of all Nations. Are theſe the Bleſſings promiſed on the coming of the *Meſſiah?* Is this the ſhining Star which was to illuminate *Iſrael*, which was to bring us Proſperity without End? Our Miſeries prove but too ſtrongly, that our Redeemer is not come. When he ſhall truly appear, the *Nazarenes* themſelves will eaſily know him by the Favours which he will beſtow upon us. He ſhall lead us forth out of Slavery, and our Liberty, our Glory, our good Fortune, ſhall become ſuch ſhining Evidences, as to convince even the moſt obſtinate and the moſt infatuated of our Enemies.

Farewel, dear *Monceca*, live content and happy, and depend on my giving you, in my next, ſome farther Remarks on the impertinent Work of this Rabbinical Impoſtor.

Cairo.

LET-

LETTER CLX.

ISAAC ONIS, *Caraite, formerly a* Rabbi *at* Conſtantinople, *to* AARON MONCECA.

I Promiſed you, dear *Monceca*, to write to you once again, on the Head of the Abſurdities and Falſities which the Rabbins have inſerted in the Life of the Legiſlator of the *Nazarenes*. I ſhall begin with a Paſſage which follows that I copied in my laſt, and which the ſhameleſs ridiculous Hiſtorian continues in theſe Terms *.

" The

* *Rex ergo & Sapientes perſpicientes, Aïtas Iſraelitis ſuperiores evadere, & adaugeri etiam Agmen Hominum impiiſſimorum, (erant hi Fratres & Cognati Jeſu,) Conſilia invicem ineunt Jehudamque rogant, quid optimum Factu in Re difficili ſibi videretur? Reſpondit Jehuda:* Ecce Avunculus Jeſu eſt Simeon Hakkalpaſi, qui itidem eſt Senex venerabilis admodum. Tradite, ſultis, ei Nomen Immenſum, & ablegate illum Aï, ibi ut patret Miracula, Civibuſque edicat, omnia illa ſe facere על רעת ישו. Aïtæ vero opiniabuntur, dicere illum velle בשם ישו, in Nomine Jeſu; cum Explicatio tamen Vocularum על רעת ambigua ſit, atque adeo apta nata ad decipiendes illa Aïtas: nam על דעת (quod notare etiam poteſt *ex Mente Jeſu, in Nomine Jeſu,*) Stylo Rabbinico eſt לשון אנוס, Phraſis quæ exprimit Actum, quem coactus quis & invitus ob urgentem Neceſſitatem ſuſcipit. Viri verò Aïtæ credent Verbis Simeonis, Avunculus Jeſu cum ſit. Oportet autem perſuadeat Simeon illis, in Mandatis ei dediſſe Jeſum edicere iis ne belligerarent cum Iſraelitis, cum

" The King and the Wiſemen about him, ob-
" ſerving that the *Aitans* grew every day more
" powerful, and that the Number of Innovators
" and impious Perſons encreaſed continually,
" among whom the Relations of *Jeſus* eminently
" diſtinguiſh'd themſelves, deliberated ſeriouſly
" what meaſures it became them to take; inviting
" *Jehuda* to Council, and intreating him to give
" his Advice freely. To which *Jehuda* anſwer'd
" thus: *Behold* Simeon Hakkalpaſi, *Uncle to* Jeſus.
" *He*

cum Jeſus ipſemet Vindictam de illis ſumturus eſſet. *Approbabat ſe hoc Conſilium Regi & Sapientibus. Accerſunt itaque Simeonem, illique Rem totam enarrant. Reſpondit Simeon:* Jurate mihi ſanctè, Hæredem me futurum Seculi venturi. Tunc ibo ego lubens, illiſque proponam Statuta non bona, atque ceſſare faciam Bellum ab Iſraele. *Jurant proinde Sapientes & Seniores Simeoni, eique committunt Nominis Immenſi Arcanum ſacratiſſimum.*

Abiit ergo Simeon, & cum prope jam Aï eſſet, effinxit Nubeculam aliquam minorem; Tonitrubuſque & Fulgetris inde emiſſis, ipſe Nubeculæ inſedit, Mugituque Tonitru, quo Aitas percelleret, edito, in hæc Verba fari cæpit: Audite, viri Aïtæ. Convenite ad Turrim Aïticam, & ibi præſcribam vobis Statuta Jeſchu. *Aïtæ, Voce hac auditâ perterrefacti, undique ad Turrim iſtam concurrunt. Et ecce Simeon fertur ſupra Nubem. Deſcendit vero poſtea de Nube in Turrim; & viri Aïtæ ſe coram eo proſternunt. Dicit autem Simeon:* Ego ſum Simeon Hakkalph, Avunculus Jeſchu. Jeſus vero convenit me, meque ad vos amandavit, ut edocerem vos Statuta ejus; nam Jeſus Filius Dei eſt. Ego porro Simeon edocebo vos Legem Jeſu, Statuta nova. *Edidit vero Simeon in Conſpectu eorum Signa & Portenta magna. Aïtæ proin Verbis Simeonis Fidem adhibuerunt, eique dixerunt:* Faciemus, & obſequemur omni, quod præcepturus es nobis. *Simeon ait:* Recipite vos in Ædes veſtras. *Omnes ergo Aïtæ Ædes ſuas repetunt. Simeon autem in Turri Aïtica reſidebat, & conſcribebat Statuta illa, prout ei edixerant Rex*

&

" *He is a moſt venerable old Man. Diſcover to him*
" *all the Myſteries and all Properties of the All-*
" *powerful Name. When you have done all this, let*
" *him go immediately to the Citizens of* Ai; *let him*
" *perform before their eyes Signs and Wonders; and*
" *let him ſay, Theſe Things I do by the Power of An-*
" *other. The People of that City will undoubtedly*
" *believe he does all this by the Power of* Jeſus; *the*
" *Phraſe being exactly calculated to deceive them. For*
" *theſe Words,* By the Power, or through the Vir-

& Sapientes. Immutabat etiam Alphabetum, aliiſque Literas Nominibus inſigniebat, ad dandum tacitè Indicium, omnia quæ præcepturus erat Mendacia fore. Hoc vero Alphabetum eſt quod ille cudit: a, be, ce, de, e, ef, cha, i, ke, el, em, en, o, pe, ku, er, es, te, w, icx, etzet, zet. *Et hæc Explicatio ejus:* אנא Pater meus eſt Eſaii, צייד ועיף Venator, & laſſus ille erat: & ecce Filii ejus credunt in Jeſum, qui חי כאל vivit ut Deus. Suffocetur Anima illorum; quia Deo אם אין non eſt Mater, Jeſus vero habebat Matrem: ſed אפיקורס וחצוי ומעקש וטיוד Epicureus, Seductor, &c.

Conſcripſit inſuper in Uſum illorum Libros mendaciſſimos, eoſque vocavit עון בליוך, Iniquitatem Conſumptionis. *Putaverunt vero illi, eum dicere* אבן גליון *q. d.* Pater, & Filius, & manifeſtatus Spiritus S. *Et conſcripſit illis etiam Libros Nomine Diſcipulorum Jeſu, & ſpeciatim* Johannis: *dixit vero Jeſum omnia illa ſibi tradidiſſe. Nec abſque Intentione ſingulari concinnavit Librum* Johannis. *Illi proin putabant Myſteria ea eſſe, cum tamen omnia illa non ſint niſi Vanitas, & Figmentum Cordis: uti quæ (v. g.) ſcripſit in illo Libro* Johannis, cap. xiii. Johannem vidiſſe Beſtiam aliquam, cui fuerunt ſeptem Capita, & decem Cornua, cum decem etiam Coronis; Nomenque Beſtiæ eſt Nomen blaſphemiæ, & Numerum Nominis Beſtiæ eſſe 666. *Hic Verborum Senſus eſt:* Beſtia hæc eſt Jeſchu, Nazarenus: *ei ſunt ſeptem Capita, tot nimirum Literæ ſunt in binis Vocabulis hiſce* ישו נצרי, *&c.*

Hiſt. Jeſchuæ, *p.* 100—115.

" tue

" tue of Another, *imply, in the Rabbinical Style,*
" *acting by conſtraint, and, as it were, under the*
" *Direction of Another. Beyond all doubt, the Citi-*
" *zens of* Ai *will give entire credit to what* Simeon,
" *the Uncle of* Jeſus, *ſhall ſay to them; and then he*
" *muſt perſuade them, that it is the Will of* Jeſus
" *they ſhould ceaſe to perſecute the* Iſraelites; *becauſe*
" *he would revenge himſelf in an exemplary manner.*
" The King, and all the Wiſemen who were with
" him, approved the Advice given by *Jehuda.*
" They ſent inſtantly for old *Simeon*, and declar'd
" to him all they had reſolv'd upon. *Swear to me,*
" ſaid he, *that I ſhall never ſuffer Reproach here-*
" *after, on account of what you command me, and I*
" *ſhall obey you in all things with Pleaſure. I will*
" *lead your Enemies into criminal Opinions, and will*
" *engage them to put an end to the War they carry on*
" *againſt you.* The Wiſemen and Elders ſwore
" then to *Simeon*, as he had deſired, and reveal'd
" unto him the Myſteries of the All-powerful
" Name.

" He ſet out immediately; and when he came
" into the Neighbourhood of *Ai*, he form'd a thick
" dark Cloud, whence Lightnings play'd conti-
" nually. He placed himſelf thereupon, and ſpoke
" thence to the People thus: *Hear me, ye Inhabi-*
" *tants of* Ai, *call an Aſſembly at the Foot of the*
" *Tower, and I will inform you of the Commands of*
" Jeſus. The Inhabitants, extremely frighted,
" ran together in Crouds. *Simeon* riding on his
" Cloud, came alſo unto the ſame Place, and de-
" ſcended at laſt on the Tower. The Citizens of
" *Ai* proſtrated themſelves at his Feet; and he
" then ſpake to them after this manner: I am *Si-*
" *meon Hakkalph*, Uncle to *Jeſus*, who came to me
" lately, and ſent me unto you, to inform you of
" his Will; he is the Son of God, and I will teach

" you

" you his Law. Then did he many ſtrange Mi-
" racles; inſomuch that the Inhabitants of *Ai* be-
" lieved him, and ſaid, *We will obey you in what-*
" *ever you command, and whatever you direct us,*
" *that will we do.* *Simeon* thereupon ordain'd, that
" they ſhould retire to their Houſes; while he,
" remaining in the Tower, compiled wicked and
" prejudicial Laws, according as he had promiſed
" the King and the Elders. He changed likewiſe
" the Alphabet, and gave new Names to the Let-
" ters, to ſerve as a ſecret Index, that all he taught
" them was Lyes and Impoſtures. Now the Al-
" phabet he invented ran thus: *a, be, ce, de, e,*
" *ef, cha, i, ke, el, em, en, o, p, qu, er, eſs, te,*
" *u, icx, etzet, zet.* Of which this is the Expli-
" cation: *My Father was* Eſau *the Hunter, and he*
" *was faint*, &c. He compoſed alſo many Books
" in the Names of the Diſciples of *Jeſus*; and par-
" ticularly, the Revelations in the Name of *John*,
" &c.

Do you think, dear *Monceca*, that among the Tales of the Fairies, there is any thing more ridiculous than this Tale of *Hakkalpaſi?* Is it poſſible for Man to deviſe a more monſtrous or more abſurd Story than the extravagant Fiction of the Law, given from an high Tower by a Perſon riding thither on a Cloud. The Oath he exacted of the Elders, that the Fraud he uſed againſt the Dwellers in *Ai* ſhould not prejudice his Salvation, and their Promiſe thereupon, is it not wounding all Morality to the quick? Where is, I will not ſay the honeſt Man, but where is the Villain, who will dare to maintain, that it is lawful, under colour of ſerving any Religion, to deceive a whole People, and perſuade them to commit the greateſt Crimes, under colour of obeying the Will of God?

This Rabbinical Hiſtorian had Notions no way reconcileable to Equity or right Reaſon. It ſeems that he was as much a Cheat as a Lyar; and that he approv'd, in his Heart, any ſort of Frauds, which might turn to advantage. Of this, nothing can be a ſtronger Inſtance than the following Paſſage, in his own Words*. "Rabbi AK, ſays he, "went to *Nazareth*, and informed himſelf where "*Mezaria*, the Wife of *Karchat*, dwelt. As ſoon "as he knew it, he tranſported himſelf thither, "and found *Miriam* all alone, her Huſband being "gone abroad. *Daughter*, ſaid he, *it is by the ſpe-*"*cial Favour of Heaven, that I have found you alone,* "*your Husband being abroad. I conjure you to tell* "*me truly your Adventures; and if you inform me* "*juſtly, I promiſe you everlaſting Happineſs.* Rabbi "AK, alſo to ſatisfy her, gave her his Oath; but

* *R. AK igitur Nazaretham it, exque Incolis Urbis inquirit, ubinam habitet Mezaria, Conjugio juncta cum Karchat. Monſtrant indigenæ Rabbino Ædes, quas cum adiiſſet R. AK, non offendit ibi Maritum, ſed Uxorem ſolam; illam itaque ita affatur:* Filia mea, ſingulari Domini Providentiâ effectum eſt quòd Maritus tuus Domi non ſit. Ego itaque te per Dominum Deum Cœlorum adjuro, ut edicas mihi, quæ Studia tua, & ſint, & fuerint olim; tibique (fideliter Geſta narranti) ſpondeo Seculum futurum. *Reſpondit ei Uxor:* Jura, quæſo, mihi per Nomen Domini. *Jusjurandum confeſtim præſtat R. AK, Ore ſuo, ſed Corde illud nullum facit. Tunc Uxor ità ad eum loquitur:* Miriam ego ſum, Soror Simeonis Hakkalph, Uxor Papi. Aufugi verò cum Joſepho Pandira, & procreavit ille ex me Liberos ſpurios Bethlehemæ. Eo autem Tempore, quo Herodes illùc venit nos lapidaturus, in Ægyptum fugimus. Ibi cum ingraveſceret Annona, hùc revertimur, Nominaque noſtra immutamus, ne noſcerent nos Homines. *Hæc cum audiſſet R. AK, Veſtes laceravit eique ita edixit, &c.* Hiſt. Jeſchuæ, p. 24 & 25.

"it

" it was Lips only ſwore, and he promiſed nothing " in Heart. Then the Woman, to whom he " ſpake, anſwer'd: *I am* Miriam, *Siſter to* Simeon " Hakkalph, *&c.* Rabbi AK having heard all her " Story, rent his Clothes, *&c.*"

Behold, dear *Monceca*, in this Rabbi AK a moſt extraordinary Perſon. He makes no ſort of Difficulty of Swearing falſely, and of invoking the Holy Name of God, to give weight to his abominable Lyes. He tears his Clothes, however, at the News told him by *Miriam*; as if Adultery was a greater Crime than premeditated Perjury. But a Man, like this worthy Writer, ſeldom examines nicely what he delivers. How ſhould we expect any thing wiſe or ſage from ſo great a Fool, ſo meer a Beaſt as this ignorant Rabbi?

I will conclude this Letter with a comick and moſt extravagant Adventure of ſome of the Diſciples of *Jeſus*, which this wiſe Author thus gravely ſets down: " *Simeon Hakkalph*, ſays he, went to the " King, and ſaid, that if he would give him leave " to act as he thought fit, he would preſently de- " ſtroy all the Followers of *Jeſus*, who were in " the City of *Jeruſalem*. The King anſwer'd: *I* " *give you my Conſent; go, and the Lord be with you.* " Then *Simeon* went to the Innovators, and ſaid, " *Come, let us go to* Ai; *there you ſhall ſee the Signs and* " *Wonders I have done by the Power of* Jeſus, *and* " *thoſe which I am yet to perform.* Numbers there- " fore of theſe impious Perſons took the Road to " *Ai*, as he directed, and others rode with him in " a Cloud. But as they went thither, *Simeon* " puſhed them out of the Cloud, and threw them " on the Ground, where they lay ſlain. *Simeon* " returning thereupon to *Jeruſalem*, told the Ad- " venture to the King, which gave him great plea-

" ſure; and thenceforward *Simeon* never ſtirred " from the Court of that Prince *?"

I would aſk you, dear *Monceca*, did I wrong, to embrace the prudent Sentiments of the *Caraites*, and ought I to have reſted in a Sect, the principal Doctors whereof eſpouſe ſuch abſurd Impertinencies? If one ſtudied to invent a Fable, capable of turning a whole Work into ridicule, could one have ſucceeded better than this Rabbi? I do not believe, that in all *Arioſto*, there is a more whimſical Viſion than this of carrying Men, whom we would deſtroy, into the Air in a Cloud, and then breaking their Necks from thence. A Perſon veſted with ſuch Powers, who knew how to open new Roads through the Air, did he ſtand in need of ſuch an extraordinary Expedient as this, to put ſuch Criminals to death? He might queſtionleſs have puniſh'd them in a common Method, he who had ſuch Gifts, and not have troubled himſelf to carry Folks along in a Cloud; and then hazard the laming ſome honeſt Man, by throwing them down on his Head? Surely, ſurely, my Friend, none

* *Tum Simeon Hakkalp adit Regem, aitque:* Domine Rex, concede mihi, & removebo ego nequiſſimos hos Homines ex Hieroſolymis. *Reſpondet Rex Simeon:* Vade; Dominus tecum ſit. *Simeon ergo, clanculum ſe ad Nebulones conferens, iis ait:* Surgite; aſcendamus Aï, & ibi videbitis Prodigia, quæ ego edidi על רעה Jeſu, quæque inſuper facturus ibi ſum. *Quidam igitur Hominum turpiſſimorum Aï eunt. Quidam etiam Nubi juxta Simeonem impoſiti Hieroſolymam linquunt. In Itinere vero contigit ut Simeon Nube vectus decerneret in Terram illos dejicere; & ceciderunt Homines illi nullius Frugi de Nube, ac moriuntur. Simeon vero, Hieroſolymam repetens, Regi Negotium enarrat, Rexque de eo gaviſus eſt. Ex eâ vero Die, & poſtea, non receſſit Simeon ex Aulâ Regis uſque ad Mortem ſuam.* Hiſt. Jeſchuæ, p. 125, 126.

but

but a Rabbi would ever have been ſuch a Viſionary, as to think of raining Men.

Farewel, live content and happy, and may the great God cover thee with Proſperities, give thee perfect Health, and the Victory over all thy Enemies.

Cairo.

The End of the Fourth Volume.


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